AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

SOCCER

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COSMOS' 48 HRS REPRIEVE

Hours before the expiration of a deadline set by Soccer Australia for Canberra Cosmos to prove their financial capability in the National Soccer League, the Club was granted a 48 hour reprieve by Soccer Australia.

In a surprise letter addressed to the NSL's General Manager, Stefan Kamasz late yesterday however and signed by Cosmos' Interim Chairman, Chris Dillon, the Club argued that SA itself had questions to answer about its legal right to demand such a condition for the Club.

SA had asked Canberra Cosmos to show proof that Sydney businessman, Bill Bariamis, had "sufficient capital and resources" to take control of the Club.

Kamasz said over the weekend, "We need to ensure that the entity that is wanting to take control of the Club has sufficient capital and resources to undertake that role.

"I think the Board would be quite severe and would even look at considering the continuation of the Club in the competition."

SA therefore set a deadline of 5.00pm (Monday) yesterday for the Cosmos to prove its backing.

In the letter to Kamasz yesterday, Dillon argued that: "You (Kamasz) have been reported as having made statements to the effect that there is some doubt about our participation in the NSL. Furthermore, the chairman of Soccer Australia has called me claiming that the Board of Soccer Australia may revoke our licence to participate in the 2001-2002 season if we do not complete and lodge documentation concerning our proposed shareholding transaction by Monday, 3rd September, 2001".

In the concluding part of the letter, Dillon threw down the gauntlet: "If there is no breach of the Participation Agreement, please advise why you and your chairman have made the remarks and damaging statements to which I have referred in this letter".

Dillon's missive is clearly in tune with the fighting mood at the Club, who look set to drag the NSL and Soccer Australia into a face-off over new, perceived threats to the Club's existence.

Dillon also told the Canberra Times on Sunday night: "(Soccer Australia) hasn't got a leg to stand on … this is panic-button stuff from them and they need to grow up."

Bariamis, the Sydney-based tycoon believed to be the brain behind the new-look Cosmos, who assumed a 56 per cent stake in the Club two weeks ago also stoked up the embers of conflict with Soccer Australia: "They (Soccer Australia) insisted we follow due process but then they come to us and say 'Monday five o'clock you're gone.'

"But we are following due process and solicitors are still working through the shareholders agreements."

Irish captain Roy Keane evades a challenge by Dutch defender Jaap Stam. Inset: Jason McAteer celebrates his winning goal. The 1-0 loss all but ends Holland's hopes of qualifying for the 2002 World Cup.

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SOUTHS, GLORY IGNITE NEW NSL SEASON

The 2001 Premiers South Melbourne will lock horns with Perth Glory at Bob Jane Stadium in Melbourne on Sunday, October 7th in what will be star fixture of the new 2001-2002 NSL season.

Based on the fixture list released last week by Soccer Australia, both teams will try out their various off-season acquisitions, which included both coaches and players as the new season kicks-off.

The real kick-off however is billed for 48hours earlier when defending champions Wollongong Wolves host Marconi Stallions at the WIN stadium in what will be the curtain-raiser.

The full draw meanwhile consists of 14 teams competing over 26 rounds commencing on the weekend beginning Friday 5 October 2001, with no matches scheduled for the week between Christmas and the New Year.

The Finals Series will involve the Top 6 (six) teams and culminate with the Grand Final on the weekend of 11-12 May 2002 to determine the NSL Champions.

According to National Soccer League General Manager, Stefan Kamasz, "this NSL season kicks-off with some exciting matches in the opening round."

"This should set the agenda for another closely fought battle for a Top Six Finals spot this season. With many clubs recruiting well in the off-season, Sydney Olympic's relocation to the strong Sutherland shire region, and closer community ties for many clubs, I'm glad to see the focus turning back to the players and the action on the pitch," he said.

The first round of games also promises some interesting clashes in the competition, with Newcastle United striving to recapture for the city the NSL crowd record which currently stands at 18,895 (Northern Spirit Vs Sydney Olympic, 9 October 1998).

United entertain last seasonís Top 6 side Melbourne Knights at Marathon Stadium.

The first of local derbies will see Sydney Olympicís first home match at Toyota Park against traditional rivals Sydney United, while Parramatta Power go up against Northern Spirit in the battle of Sydney's newest clubs.

'Black Knight' Bill dreams of Cosmos empire

By Graham Cooke

New Canberra Cosmos owner Bill Bariamis has vowed to 'build a soccer empire' in the National Capital, and that if necessary 'blood will be spilled' in order to ensure he gets his way.

In an interview with local media Bariamis shied away from any suggestion he was a soccer saviour. "I'm not a white knight, I liken myself to a black knight," he said.

And while the club's new major sponsor, Union Financial Services Corporation, is ready to back the club with $700,000 a year — that money will be coming in dribs and drabs, rather than a lump sum.

That may be a wise move with the club's former coach, Antonio Alzamendi, sacked as part of the deal that brought Bariamis and the sponsor to the club, last week launched the legal action his lawyer believes could cost the Cosmos dear.

Bariamis said his dream is to make the Cosmos financially secure, and able to concentrate on servicing their fans and sponsors. And he backed Leon Gardikiotis, the man he insisted had to coach the Cosmos, as having "tremendous ideas… fresh and with great connections in Australia and overseas".

Gardikiotis received his first setback last week when Angolan striker Vata Matanu Garcia, was denied a visa. Although no reason was given, uncertainties over his age, variously rumoured to be between 36 and 40, may have produced problems with the Department of Immigration.

Although he once played for the world-famous Portuguese club, Benfica, the department would certainly have been suspicious of a person of such mature years seeking to play National League Soccer in Australia for the first time.

A number of players have agreed to terms however, joining Robbie Hooker and Mark Hager, who were the only members of the playing staff still under contract from last season.

New Zealander Brad Scott, Con Anthopoulos, Ned Aleksic, Tom Karapos, and Geoff Howarth are joining the squad, but although the club included the name of former captain Ivan Zelic on a list of players it expected to sign shortly, other sources said Zelic was unhappy with the $20,000 package offered and expected him to try his luck in Europe instead.

Shane Lyons, a player from last season dismissed by Alzamendi, is being given a second chance to prove himself under the new coach, and Michael Katz, a Canberra-based midfielder who played for the defunct Eastern Pride, has returned to trial after a United States university sports scholarship fell through because of his professional status.

Shane Lyons: Gets another chance.

Leon Gardikiotis: Canberra Cosmos new coach.

JOEYS WIN AGAIN ON TOUR

The Joeys continued on their good run, with a 10-1 victory over IMG Academies Select in Miami over the weekend.

The Australian Under-17s dominated the practice match conceding only one goal early in the piece, with Brett Holman, Terry Smith and Anthony Danze each netting one, while captain Carl Valeri scored a double before the break.

Matthew Engele made it 6-1 ten minutes after half-time … Nick Stavroulakis adding another before Southampton striker Jay Lucas sealed the match with a hat-trick.

The Joeys are due to meet MSL side Mutiny later today (Tuesday), in preparation for the FIFA Under 17 World Championships in Trinidad and Tobago in mid-September.

OLYMPIC SHARKS

SUTHERLAND SHIRE JUNIOR SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

TRIAL DATES

JUNIOR AND CADET LEAGUE

Under 11's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	9.00am
Under 12's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	10.30am

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE

Under 13's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	12.00noon
Under 14's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	1.30pm
Under 15's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	3.00pm
Under 17's	22.9.01	29.9.01	6.10.01	4.30pm

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Rugby Gets It Right, Why Not Soccer?

SOCCER for many years has held powerful aspirations of becoming the Number One Sport in Australia.

Despite having the largest number of registered players of any sporting code in the nation, Soccer has failed to gain the status of being Number One.

For years our sporting code, (the world's largest), in Australia, has been constantly choked by sustained politics that has severely impeded Soccer's progress whilst other football codes in recent years have rocketted right past.

Look at what's happened with the current Australian Rugby Union Wallabies against the British Lions. A torrid battle in the last game which Australia won, in a match that today is still talked about.

And what about last Saturday night's international epic combat in Sydney with Australia fighting gallantly against the fierce 'All Blacks'?

Australia won 29-26 in the final minutes of this grand battle royale.

What an absolute spectacle in front of 91,000.

It's often been said that 'from little things, big things grow.'

'Good Oil' yesterday contacted former Australian Rugby Union captain and living legend, Mark Ella.

Ella, an incredible fly-half with explosive acceleration and magic hands, became the first Aboriginal captain of any Australian international team.

Today, Ella is still heavily involved with the Australian Rugby Union, tenaciously working to drive and promote Union in Australia at a high standard.

What is Soccer doing?

With Union's large sponsor, 'Bundaberg Rum', Ella is working harder than ever.

Where are Soccer's former international greats involved in our code today?

This, and for years, has been a very sore point by this columnist.

When we caught up with Ella, he told us:

"A lot of people said it would be too hard.

"But the difference it has made to senior Club Rugby this season has been incredible and it's an absolute credit to Bundaberg Rum to make the programme a reality."

From the beginning of their sponsorship of Rugby Union, 'Bundaberg Rum' wanted to support not only the Wallabies, but every senior Rugby Club in Australia in a most practical way.

Not really an easy task when one considers the vast size of Australia.

'Bundaberg Rum' most intelligently, (please note Soccer Australia), enlisted the help of Wallaby legend,

By John Economos

Mark Ella, and the "Bundaberg Rum Grassroots Rugby Programme" was spawned.

Launched earlier this year, the programme focused on the very basics.

'Bundaberg Rum' conducted extensive research last year and identified that most senior Rugby Union Clubs needed assistance in two main areas:

a) Basic infrastructure such as new training and playing field equipment.

b) Help with modern coaching techniques and Rugby skills. Vast problematical areas that were not easily resolved.

Mark Ella elaborated: "Ordering the new equipment for infrastructure kits was the easy part.

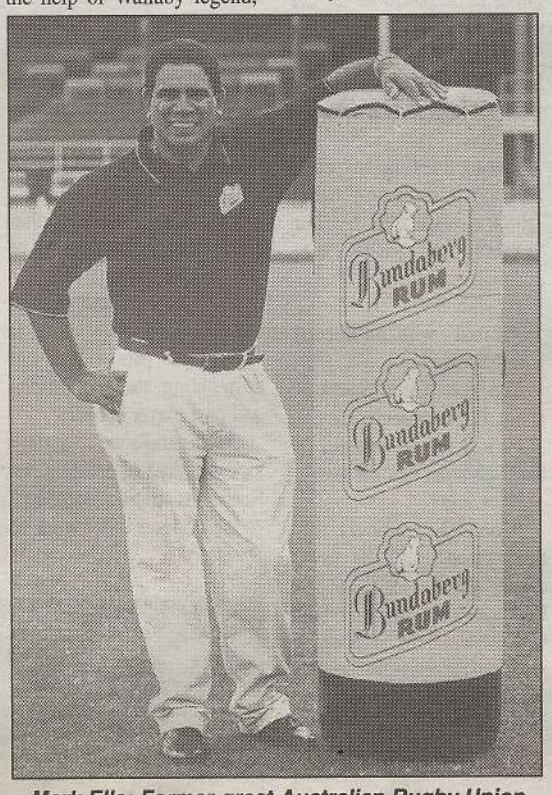
"We just picked up the phone and placed orders.

"However getting the equipment to all the Union Clubs was an enormous and logistical feat.

"In NSW alone, our team was on the road for two weeks distributing equipment.

"When you look at the distances alone, I reckon it's got to be the world's most ambitious Rugby support programme. "It's now a model for other Rugby Union nations and sponsors to follow," Ella proudly went on to suggest.

To date, "Bundaberg Rum" has supplied Rugby 'Infrastructure Kits' to senior Rugby Clubs in Queensland, NSW, ACT, Victoria and Western Australia.



Mark Ella: Former great Australian Rugby Union captain.

Each kit contained match quality Rugby balls, hit Shields, goal post pads, playing field markers and a Tackle Bag. "Bundaberg Rum" will work with the State Rugby Union bodies in South Australia, North Territory and Tasmania to extend the ambitious but highly constructive programme during 2002.

Mr Matt Brand, Brand Manager for 'Bundaberg Rum' remarking on the success of the programme, stated: "Rugby Union Clubs have greatly appreciated our work and it's most important to 'Bundaberg Rum' that we see our sponsorship is helping the heartland of Rugby."

Complementing the new equipment for the Union Clubs, a series of Rugby skills and Coaching Development Clinics that were most appropriately spearheaded by the former great Mark Ella, were conducted nationwide with an emphasis on the rural areas.

"We set about working closely with Regional Development Officers and brought in former as well as current Wallabies plus Super 12 players where possible.

"I know that coaches and players alike, appreciated having access to that sort of technical expertise," Ella said.

In recent months, Ella and 'Bundaberg Rum' have been inundated with letters of thanks from Rugby Clubs.

"I guess that's been the best part.

"A lot of clubs have told us that the Infrastructure Kits replaced worn out or lost gear and that their home ground now has the right equipment for game days," said Ella.

The "Bundaberg Rum Grassroots Rugby Programme" is continuing to deliver practical support to senior Rugby Clubs right across Australia in 2002.

As Mark Ella emphatically stated, "It's only the beginning!"

Mark Ella played 25 Tests for, and captained Australia in 10 of them from 1979 to 1984.

So with crystal clear vision from all of the above, we can easily see just why Rugby Union is rapidly progressing and building a burning desire in kids wanting to become another 'John Eales' or another 'Georgie Gregan'.

Rugby gets it right, why not Soccer.

Wollongong Downs China's Cup Champions

By John Economos

THE WOLLONGONG WOLVES, Australia's National League champions for the past two consecutive seasons, arrived back in Sydney last Sunday morning following their very successful pre-season tour of China.

The League champions' coach, Ronnie Corry, when contacted by ABSW last night, quietly but also proudly, informed us:

"We played two games against very strong and decent opposition and won both.

"In the first match we defeated China's Cup Champions Laolini Tigers 0-1.

"In heated conditions and in front of a healthy crowd of over 20,000, Saso Petrovski scored the goal for us," Corry confirmed.

In the second match, Wollongong played top side Shanghai City and won this match 1-2.

"Our goals came from Stuart Young and young Naum Sekulovski.

"We took on tour our new signings of buddy Farah, Sean Babic as well as teenager Sekulovski.

"All of them blended in very easily with our squad and all of them played very well.

"Buddy, (Farah), was even voted 'Man Of The Match' in our second game against Shanghai City."

Corry went on to elaborate: "Shanghai is a top side.

"The Club has a budget of over $10 million and are coached by a Yugoslav.

"They also have two Yugoslav imports in their squad," ended Corry.

It seems that Corry is more than a little determined to defend and retain Wollongong's title this coming season to achieve an Australian historic record of three consecutive National League Championships.

Wollongong this Saturday will have a friendly hit-out against the Northern Spirit at Christie Park, North Ryde in Sydney.

RONNIE CORRY: Wollongong's League champion coach.

The match has been scheduled with a 2.30 pm kick off.

Still on Saturday, Wollongong's Youth team will play the Spirit's Youth side at the same venue with the game starting at 12.30pm.

NAUM SEKULOVSKI: Wollongong's new signing.

A.C. UNITED SOCCER CLUB

SOCCER TRIALS 2002 SEASON

A.C. UNITED SOCCER CLUB

Super League
U18's 11.00am, U21's 1.00pm
Sunday, October 14th and 21st, 2001

Super Youth League
U13's 9.30am, U14's 11.30am, U15's 1.30pm and U16's-U17's 3.30pm
Saturday, October 13th, 20th, and 27th, 2001

Cadet League
U11's 1.00pm, U12's 3.00pm
Saturday, September 22nd, 29th, 2001

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UNDER 12 — JUNIOR LEAGUE
W14 — GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE
W16 — GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE

OLYMPIC SHARKS

UNDER 11 — CADET LEAGUE
UNDER 12 — CADET LEAGUE
UNDER 13 — PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE
UNDER 14 — PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE
UNDER 15 — PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE
UNDER 17 — PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE

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APPLICATIONS CLOSE ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2001

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

WHO is the NSL coach that recently convinced his Club officials to sign up from overseas, an 'EXPERIENCED' and former European Cup player.

However that Club's officials are hesitant to do so as now, some subtle suspicion has surfaced that their targetted 'mystery' player is rumoured to be 40 years of age.

And he's not a goalkeeper either.

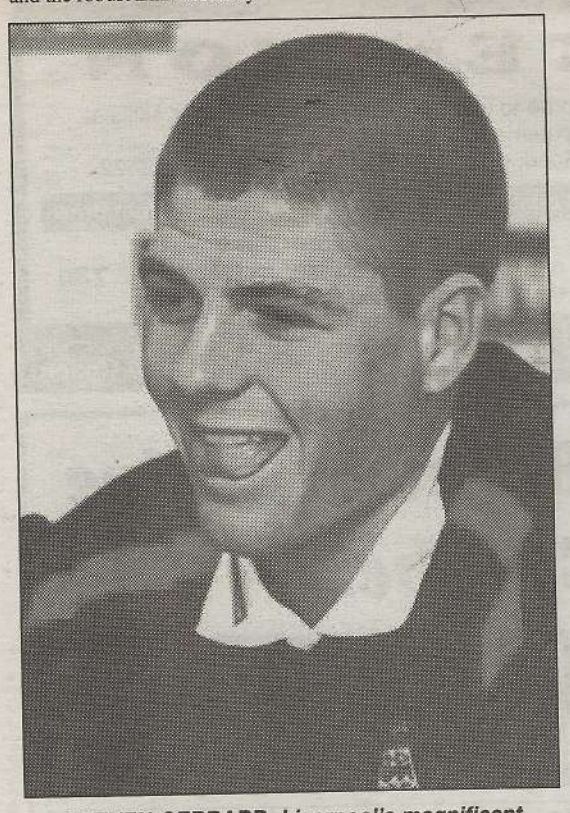
No wonder this player is rated as 'experienced'.

●●●●

THE SCORELINE sent out by the media in Munich last Sunday morning which rocked the whole of Europe, read: GERMANY 1 — ENGLAND 5.

Maybe it was an error and should have read:

GERMANY 1 — **'LIVERPOOL 5',** as all five goals for England were scored by Liverpool players including a stylish hat-trick to Michael Owen, cemented with further goals by the magnificent Steven Gerrard and the robust Emile Heskey.



STEVEN GERRARD: Liverpool's magnificent international.

England last beat the Germans in Germany back in 1965.

●●●●

NO LESS than six Grand Finals of the NSW Super Cadet and Youth Leagues were played last Saturday at the Marconi Stadium which culminated with the following results:

Under 11s

Blacktown City	1
Wollongong Wolves	0

Under 12s

Marconi	3
Northern Spirit	2

Under 13s

Blacktown City	2
Northern Spirit	1

Under 14s

Northern Spirit	3
Sydney Olympic	2

Under 15s

Blacktown City	2
Northern Spirit	0

Under 17s

Northern Spirit	2
Blacktown City	0

●●●●

LONG-SERVING Tony Labbozzetta, 15 years president of Club Marconi, will not again stand for this position at the Club's elections this coming Sunday morning.

Vice president Tony Campolongo will automatically fill this vacated role, standing unopposed.

Sunday's elections promise to be a fiery affair as no less than 35 candidates will fiercely scramble to fill the remaining 11 seats on the Board of Directors.

TONY CAMPOLONGO: Club Marconi's new president.

●●●●

SYDNEY OLYMPIC, (now renamed as 'Olympic Sharks), defeated Sutherland 4-0 (Carle 2, Cawley, Doumanis), last Sunday afternoon in a friendly played at Wentworth Park.

Olympic will play its second pre-season friendly tonight, (Tuesday) at 6.30pm Fraser Park against the Parramatta Power.

●●●●

AUSTRALIAN SOCCER, (off the pitch that is), has for years, (and with a most annoying monotonous regularity), been shooting itself in the foot.

And in all those years, not to risk missing the target, has even been using a shotgun to do it.

For example, on numerous occasions, whenever Soccer has held a function, an event or some formal social gathering, we have always utilised these get-togethers to promote other sports.

Really?

Yet we do this despite our very own sport is starving for any recognition, promotion or exposure.

BILL LAWRY: Past Australian Test Cricket captain.

How many times have we seen identities from other sporting fields, officiating at our functions over the many years?

Why on Earth do we do this?

For example at a season launch of the NSL we went and engaged a prominent Rugby League television presenter.

At annual awards, we use high-profiled personalities that have no connection with Soccer whatsoever, other than come in a pick up some easy monies as an appearance fee.

Why does Soccer do this?

Is it because we have no credibility of our own and we thus try to hijack such desired credibility by contracting in, sporting personalities from other codes?

Well hang on, again we are about to repeat this ridiculous situation come November.

Australia's historic 1974 World Cup team, our first and only team to have made it to a World Cup Finals, is going to be re-united for the coming South American World Cup qualifier at the M.C.G. in Melbourne.

A noble gesture by Soccer Australia.

During this time, a special function is right now being secretly organised by our 'powers to be' for this special occasion.

A luncheon is being 'organised' with a 'Special Guest Speaker'.

Yep, this 'Guest Speaker' is not a Soccer personality.

He's a former captain of the Australian Cricket team.

His name?

'*Good Oil*' believes that this 'guest' will be none other than Bill ('The Phantom') Lawry, Test Opener and past skipper of Australian Test Cricket.

So again, why on Earth is Australian Soccer inviting somebody like the 'plumber' to be the speaker, and who will be paid handsomely for it?

There is something drastically wrong here, isn't there? Maybe, and only just maybe, one could understand it if the specially selected Guest Speaker could have been the Late Sir Donald, (I would have wished), prior to his passing away.

Or even the magnificent, current steely Test captain, Steve Waugh—he himself a former Soccer player.

But the 'Plumber'?

Who are these people employed at Soccer Australia that made this most recent, (yet to be disclosed), cardinal stuff up?

Hasn't Australian Soccer a personality of its very own?

Yes we certainly do.

And many of them.

By Soccer Australia constantly engaging and promoting high-profiled identities from other sporting fields, no wonder all our younger players have no tradition to look up to and thus strive to follow.

Put in an other way, would the Australian Cricket Board invite say, Paul Okon, Johnny Watkiss, Tony Henderson, John Kosmina or Johnny Warren to act as a Guest Speaker at one of its Cricketing luncheons?

Methinks most certainly not.

All these cardinal errors are happening, simply because we don't have, (yet again), a professional administration.

An administration that possesses a definite degree of 'product knowledge'.

Rugby Union and Cricket are most notorious when it comes to protecting and stimulating their traditions and past player heroes.

At this stage we're getting sick and tired of pointing out Soccer Australia's mistakes.

We do have other work to attend to.

JULIE MURRAY: Australia's captain, full-time pro in the USA.

●●●●

JULIE MURRAY, the Australian captain, who scored the winning goal in the USA's first Women's Professional League Cup Final last week, is living the life of a true full-time professional player over in the States.

The 31 year old Aussie striker, who was bestowed the lofty tag of 'Most Valuable Player' in the Final, won by her team 'The Bay Area CyberRays over favourites Atlanta Beat, since arriving in America has been treated as a real star.

Living in an apartment with a Brazilian teammate, all Julie has had to do was train, eat, rest and play whilst being paid a handsome contract fee.

Murray scored 11 goals for the season just ended with two in the Final, including the vital winning goal in the penalty-shoot out that gave her team CyberRays victory over favourites Atlanta to grab the USA Womens League Championship.

●●●●

JASON KEARTON, (as predicted in this column last week), has signed for the Brisbane Strikers.

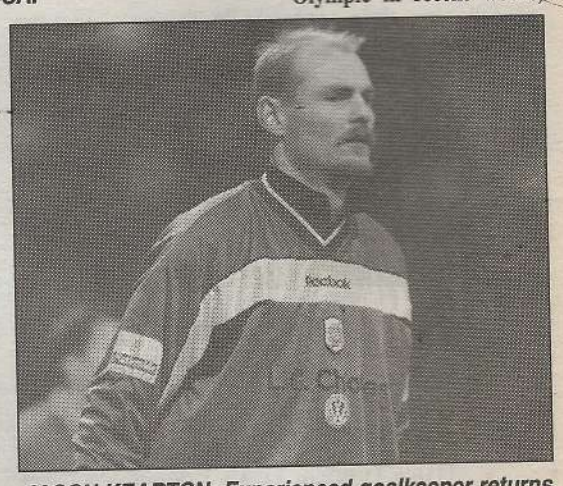
The 32 year old goalkeeper had left Brisbane 13 years ago at the age of just 19, to sign for England Premier League side, Everton.

Now a married man to his Australian wife Stacey, the Keartons have two children, (Jake 7 and Chloe 3), both born in England.

As a teenager, Jason played for Queensland side Coalstars, (near Ipswich), before joining the Brisbane Lions for a season in the NSL.

Whilst at Lions his outstanding performances attracted Everton's attention.

Following eight seasons with the 'Toffeemen', Kearton then moved to Crewe Alexandria remaining there for five years before deciding to come 'home' and join the Brisbane Strikers.



JASON KEARTON: Experienced goalkeeper returns home to Brisbane.

Born in 1969 in Raceview, the small township near Ipswich, Jason rejected offers from the Perth Glory as well as the Auckland Kingz to sign for John Kosmina at the Brisbane Strikers.

Kearton stated to the Brisbane media last week: "After 13 years overseas I'm pleased to be back.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge of making the Strikers the Number One team in the NSL."

●●●●

SYDNEY OLYMPIC, (as also anticipated in this column last week), has sign Sydney United's mobile right midfielder, Tommy Pondeljak.

The 25 year old goalscorer signed with Olympic last Tuesday afternoon a one year contract.

Having played many seasons for the Melbourne Knights before joining Sydney United, Pondeljak stated last week: " I'm very happy to have signed with Olympic and look forward to enjoying a successful season with my new Club."

TOMMY PONDELJAK: Flank-speedster signed by Olympic.

Olympic's General manager, Peter Raskopoulos, commented:

"We're excited to have a player of Tom's calibre at Olympic.

"He will be a very valuable asset to us this coming season."

Pondeljak is the fourth new signing made by Olympic in recent weeks, adding to the 'acquisitions trifecta' of North, Harris and Shroj all signed from the Brisbane Strikers.

Olympic played its first pre-season match last Sunday at Wentworth Park against NSW Premier League outfit, the Sutherland Sharks.

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

GLENN GWYNNE, the Brisbane Strikers' outstanding defender, has unfortunately made the decision to retire from the game.

The classy 29 year old Gwynne entered the National Soccer League ten years ago whilst playing for Brisbane United.

GLENN GWYNNE: Has announced his retirement.

During seasons 1993 and '94, Gwynne played for the Parramatta Eagles before returning back to Brisbane the following year.

Having played 202 NSL matches, Gwynne at the end of last season shifted to North Queensland but returned to Brisbane for one more season.

"My decision now to return to North Queensland is purely a personal one," stated Gwynne late last week.

With the Brisbane Strikers for the coming season moving into a full-time mode, Gwynne found himself regrettably unable under his present circumstances to devote this time to the Strikers.

The Strikers' new General Manager and former Secretary of the Queensland Soccer Federation, Mr Alan Vessey, praised Gwynne by stating: "Glenn's decision was entirely his own.

"Whilst the Club does not want to lose a player of his outstanding ability, we understand, and appreciate, his desire to give his family priority.

" I would like it placed on record that Glenn's long association with this Club has been most valuable.

"Glenn was a vital member of the team when it secured the National League Championship in 1997," ended Vessey.

It was Gwynne that during that 1997 Grand Final, totally marked out star playmaker, Kresimir Marusic that ultimately crippled Sydney United's momentum that enabled Frank Farina's Brisbane Strikers to win 2-0 in front of a massive 41,000 crowd at the Suncorp Stadium.

●●●●

FOLLOWING alarming media reports last week that many of our international players were still owed monies from the Oceania Nations Cup last year, hasty financial arrangements have now been made by Soccer Australia to have these outstanding payments settled in full.

IAN KNOP: Soccer Australia's new chairman.

At a Board Of Commissioners' Meeting held early last week it was resolved that Soccer Australia will have paid all outstandings within two weeks.

All other remaining monies owing would be settled by the end of this month.

The figure owing to our international players has been reported to tally some $1.2 million.

New Chairman at Soccer Australia, Ian Knop, pledged last week: "Our number one priority is to ensure the monetary commitment to players is met in the lead-up to the game against France and the two World Cup Qualifiers in November."

"This has been communicated personally to the 'Professional Footballers' Association as well as to the national team players.

●●●●

We do have personnel employed in Soccer fulltime.

But again we must ask, what are they doing for the code?

Last week I regretfully received a complaint from a certain College in Sydney, which had called Soccer Australia requesting to send out 'someone important' to make presentations at their 'Awards Night'.

Despite numerous calls, the College was recently informed that unfortunately, no one could make it.

Great stuff.

●●●●

SYDNEY OLYMPIC, tomorrow, (Wednesday) at 11 am, will hold a special Press Conference.

The Conference will be staged at the Cronulla Leagues Club, Captain Cook Drive at Woolooware.

Olympic's former international and captain, General manager, Peter Raskopoulos stated to 'Good Oil':

"We are holding the Conference to launch Olympic's official relocation to Toyota Park for the coming new NSL season."

As announced last week in 'Good Oil', Sydney Olympic has changed its name to 'Olympic Shark' to make themselves more synonymous with the Cronulla Sharks.

PETER RASKOPOULOS: Sydney Olympic's General manager.

●●●●

LITHUANIA, the nation Frank Farina's national team is scheduled to have a friendly hit-out against next month, could be far tougher than first expected.

Last Sunday Lithuania pulled off a surprise goalless draw against the star-studded Italians in their home World Cup Qualifier.

Lithuania is bottom of Group 8 whilst the Italians, (still undefeated after seven matches), lead with 17 points from seven outings.

Italy's World Cup skipper Paolo Maldini was still quite confident despite the draw, stating: "We played a good game but it was unfortunate that we couldn't secure automatic qualification in this game."

Maldini went on to add: "We have to accept that this result means that we are really not there 100% yet, but our qualification will ultimately be ours."

Former Marconi Junior, Christian Vieri, started upfront for Italy with Alessandro Del Piero who was hooked on the hour mark and replaced by Filippo Inzaghi.

Italy's next match and last qualifier for them, will be at home against Hungary on 6th October.

In another shock World Cup Qualifier result played last Sunday, the Republic of Ireland rocked Europe by downing Holland 1-0 in Dublin.

PAOLO MALDINI: Italy's World Cup captain.

Blackburn Rovers' midfielder Jason McAteer lifted Ireland onto the scoreboard 22 minutes after the break when he slammed into the target a cross from substitute Steve Finnan.

This was McAteer's third only international goal.

The industrious midfielder also scored in Amsterdam in the first leg last year when the two nations fought out a 2-2 draw.

●●●●

NEWCASTLE UNITED's Mark Wilson and Matthew Bingley, together with Team Mascot, made a Guest Appearance last Sunday when they flew in by Helicopter into Sunday's Grand Final between Hamilton Olympic and Highfield Azzurri.

MARK WILSON: Newcastle United's star at Grand Final.

Played at Edgeworth, Hamilton ran out 2-0 victors.

On Wednesday week, Hamilton Olympic will play a friendly match against Newcastle United in Hamilton.

Leichhardt Tigers Soccer Club Inc.

2002 Trials

Trials for Super League Cadets & Youth League

Venue — Leichhardt Oval No 2, Leichhardt

Cadets

Under 11			Under 12		
Sunday	30th September	9.00am	Sunday	30th September	11.00am
Friday	5th October	5.30pm	Friday	5th October	7.00pm
Sunday	7th October	9.00am	Sunday	7th October	11.00am
Friday	12th October	5.30pm	Friday	12th October	7.00pm
Sunday	14th October	9.00am	Sunday	14th October	11.00am
Friday	19th October	5.30pm	Friday	19th October	7.00pm

Youth League

Under 13					
Monday	1st October	6.00pm	Saturday	6th October	9.00am
Monday	8th October	6.00pm	Saturday	13th October	9.00am
Monday	15th October	6.00pm	Saturday	20th October	9.00am
Under 14					
Tuesday	2nd October	6.00pm	Saturday	6th October	3.00pm
Tuesday	9th October	6.00pm	Saturday	13th October	3.00pm
Tuesday	16th October	6.00pm	Saturday	20th October	3.00pm
Under 15					
Wednesday	3rd October	6.00pm	Saturday	6th October	1.00pm
Wednesday	10th October	6.00pm	Saturday	13th October	1.00pm
Wednesday	17th October	6.00pm	Saturday	20th October	1.00pm
Under 17					
Thursday	4th October	6.00pm	Saturday	6th October	11.00am
Thursday	11th October	6.00pm	Saturday	13th October	11.00am
Thursday	18th October	6.00pm	Saturday	20th October	11.00am

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES PLEASE PHONE LEICHHARDT TIGERS 24HR INFO LINE

0402 306 666

On September 5th, a united Europe becomes totally divided.

It's the day where the nations of Europe battle it out to qualify for next year's World Cup. Some will make it, while others will have to wait another four, very long years. Whether you're backing England, Spain, Scotland or Portugal, you can place a bet on the result at your local TAB. And if you think you're up to it, you can even bet on the eventual World Cup Winner.

WORLD CUP FINAL WINNER

France	$4.50	Germany	$13.00	Nigeria	$41.00	Denmark	$81.00	Yugoslavia	$126.00
Argentina	$5.00	England	$13.00	Australia	$41.00	Poland	$81.00	Romania	$126.00
Brazil	$7.00	Portugal	$21.00	Russia	$51.00	Croatia	$101.00	Ukraine	$251.00
Italy	$10.00	Holland	$26.00	Paraguay	$61.00	Belgium	$101.00	Scotland	$251.00
Spain	$13.00	Sweden	$34.00	Czech Republic	$67.00	Rep. of Ireland	$101.00	Norway	$501.00

*These prices may fluctuate.

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No coach can take credit for a player – Kelly Cross

Youth Profile

As part of our continuing coverage of youth soccer in Australia, Youth writer MARK STAVROULAKIS recently spoke extensively with Kelly Cross, Head Coach of Soccer, NSW Institute of Sport (NSWIS) on his opinions and involvement with underaged level of the code.

ABSW: Kelly, you've been one of the quiet achievers in developing top young players in this country. You coached Harry Kewell for three years but you've never made a big fuss of your part in this phenomenal player's progress. Why not?

KC: I don't believe any one coach can take the credit for producing a player. I'm happy knowing that the program I am involved in contributed to Harry's development. The same with Brett Emerton; he was with me in 1993 and 1994. But coaches like Oscar Gonzalez and David Lee worked with him before me. After NSWIS, Brett moved on to the AIS, where Steve O'Connor polished him up some more. Les Scheinflug gave him International experience and guidance in the Joeys, too. Many coaches play a part.

Harry Kewell, looking every inch a promising teenager back in 1994 at the NSWIS under the tutelage of Cross.

ABSW: You were Assistant Coach of that Australian Team, too. I suppose the World Cup Final would take some beating?

KC: Of course. For me as a coach, there's nothing better. A gold medal would have been nice, though! But the real pleasure was that I had selected two of those players at the age of 11, the other five at 14 or 15 and worked with them for at least two years, including a year with the NSW State U-15 Team in 1997.

ABSW: Many of your boys are now playing professionally overseas, such as Gareth Edds (Nottingham Forest), Shane Cansdell-Sherriff and Jam ie McMaster (Leeds Utd), David Carney (Everton) and Matthew Rosier (Southampton), to name a few. Do you see overseas contracts as the icing on the cake?

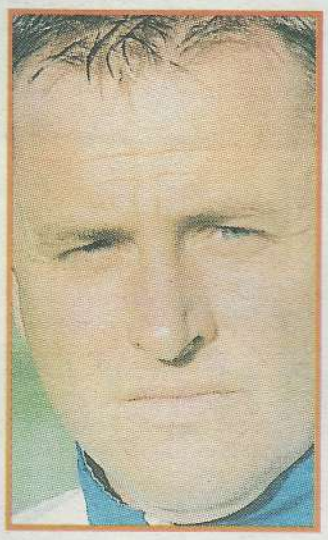
KC: A lot of the players dream of a contract in an overseas league, and if they make it I'll be proud of them. But I'm a firm believer that a youngster can get an excellent soccer education here. At Under-17 level Australia is ranked seventh in the FIFA All-Time Rankings.

ABSW: How long were you running the program at Westfields?

KC: I started in 1993. Tommy Sermanni did a great job with the first squad in 1992. I then built it up year by year till late 1997, when there were squads from Year 7 right up to Seniors.

ABSW: Tell me some of the players you coached there.

KC: Oh, there's quite a few. Harry Kewell, Jason Culina (Ajax), Nahuel Arrarte (Sydney United), Gareth Edds (Nottingham Forest), Jamie McMaster (Leeds United), Shane Cansdell-Sherriff (Leeds United), Matthew Rosier (Southampton), David Carney (Everton), Trent McClenahan (West Ham).



Kelly Cross: "The thing that worries me now is the number of young players having managers and agents ..."

ABSW: What about Jacob Burns and Les Pogliacomi?

KC: They were at the school, but were too old to have been part of the program.

ABSW: What's happened to the program at Westfields?

KC: Well, it's not an official program of the NSW Soccer Federation like it used to be.

ABSW: A lot of people say that was because of the school linking itself with overseas clubs.

KC: I wouldn't be able to comment on that.

ABSW: Everywhere you turn these days, it seems that someone is opening up an Academy. What controls does the Soccer Federation have over these Academies?

KC: I don' t think the Federation has any control over them. It's not like England, apparently, where you have to be approved by the F.A. to get a licence to run an Academy.

ABSW: How long have you been doing the job?

KC: Four years this time round, but I was Head Coach back in 1993 and 1994, and also Assistant Coach 1996 and 1997.

Paul Reid: is not only a classy player, but is a terrific model for all those small players who find it hard to make it early on.

ABSW: What representation does NSWIS have in the current 2001 Joeys?

KC: Seven of the squad that just left for the World Cup have been in the NSWIS program.

We' re quite proud that two of the current NSWIS squad, who are both only 16, were selected.

ABSW: The boys must look up to Kewell and Emerton as NSWIS graduates that have made the Socceroos.

KC: Sure they do, but don't forget Archie Thompson and Paul Reid were in the same squad with Harry and Brett and have also made Socceroo squads. Paul Reid is not only a classy player, but is a terrific model for all those small players who find it hard to make it early on.

He was a tiny little thing. A lot of coaches won't bother with the smaller lads, but we could see the boy had great vision and excellent technique so we kept him with us. Reidy had three good years with us, 1993, 1994 and the 1996-97 season.

ABSW: I guess the boys are lucky that you are responsible full-time for their development.

KC: If I wasn't full-time, it would be tough getting to training with the boys six times a week! But you're right, I dedicate myself totally to one squad of 14 to 16 year-olds full-time. That allows me to do all sorts of extra things for the boys, like video analysis.

I have analysed international matches and world-class players and developed a video database. Before training, I can show the boys a short video of France defending, for example, before we go out and work on it on the field. I also analyse our own games in the National Youth League and provide personal highlights videos for the players so they can get real feedback on their own performance.

ABSW: What other services does the NSW Institute offer?

KC: There' s a whole list of things we do off the park that help the boys perform on the park, such as sports psychology, media training, nutrition support, career planning, financial advice, recovery strategies, the list goes on …

ABSW: You mentioned before that the boys train six times a week. That sounds like a lot for young boys.

KC: We don't train six times a week all year round, usually five or four when we play, but recently we've been on our off-season phase and three of the six sessions have been strength training in the gym.

The thing is, an Institute scholarship is for a full year, so there are certain times when you can gain great benefits in developing stronger, faster players which is when they're not playing a game every week. The improvements you see are tremendous.

ABSW: — What other staff do you have helping you?

Brett Emerton: A NSWIS success story now playing with Feyenoord.

KC: The NSWIS Assistant Coach is George Fallah here in Sydney. George has been working with me pretty much non-stop since he helped me with the NSW State 15s in 1995. I also have Ken Kaiser as Assistant in Newcastle to look after four boys that we have up there.

The goalkeeper coaches are John Crawley in Sydney and Clint Gosling in Newcastle. Our trainer is Tom Haythornthwaite, who is an ex-NSL player as well as having a strong Sports Science background. It's a terrific group of staff.

ABSW: What advice would you give to young players?

KC: I have to say that the biggest thing that worries me at the moment is the number of young players having agents and managers, and maybe because of that, youngsters seem set on going overseas before they are ready.

There's no need to leave your parents and move to another country before about 17 or 18.

Don't let people fill your head with ideas of trials overseas at a young age. I think boys need realistic advice, not false dreams. I would give the same advice as Mark Byrnes did to our State squads last year — establish yourself here first, then go overseas.

It didn't do Brett Emerton any harm, and despite what a lot of people think Harry Kewell was 17 when he went to Leeds and had already played in the U-17 World Cup for Australia.

Too many boys think their best friend is the man who gets them a trial overseas. Anyone can get a trial overseas, but few actually succeed.

So your best friend is the man who prepares you to succeed when you go over. A lot of lads also think a race to see who gets a trial overseas first. Use your common sense, learn your trade here, then go over when your quote re ready.

ABSW: Kelly, thanks for your time and all the best with your current squad.

Identity tags issued to Brett Emerton (top) and Harry Kewell in 1979 and 1978 respectively while they were pupils of the NSWIS.

Spirit, Wolves square-up in pre-season trial

Northern Spirit coach Mickey Hickman will be seeking teamwork when Northern Spirit starts its 2001/02 National Soccer League trials campaign against defending NSL champions Wollongong Wolves at Christie Park on Saturday.

The off season recruciting program has seen 10 new faces arrive at Northern Spirit and Hickman believes the talent is on board, it is now a matter of moulding the players into a tight unit before the season starts on October 6 when Spirit tackles Parramatta Power.

New faces, Julian Watts, Michael Cartwright and Simon Bell, midfielders Andrew McDermott, Robert Trajkovski and John Hutchinson, strikers Pablo Cardozo and Adrian Cervinski as well as goalkeeper Lupce Acevski are all fighting for a place amongst Hickman's top 11 players.

To combat the hurdle, Hickman has been mixing some strenuous pre-season fitnesw work with plenty of small games so that the players can start to beocme accustomed to each other in game-like situations.

Mickey Hickman: Spirit's coach.

"I'm looking for togetherness, for combinations, for understandings," Hickman said. "We have worked hard but over the next five weeks I need the players to start to learn everything about each other, they need to know every little details about each others game, in every circumstance on the field.

"Combination and cohesion ar ecrucial in football and we are a little behind the ight ball compared to the other sides, who have not had the same amount of changes in playing staff that we have had.

"I am not expecting too much in the match against Wollongong as it is our first match but I am hoping to see a few indications, a few flickers, a few signs that we are going to get together as a good football team."

Hickman will be keeping a close eye on how Socceroo striker Pablo Cardozo performs, especially in tandem with fellow striker Adrian Cervinski, as well as the combinations that need to built in the midfield and centre of defence.

Craig Foster, who has looked decidedly sharp during pre-season training, will shoulder a lot of the responsibility in the centre of midfield with talented recruits McDermott, Hutchinson and Trajkovski battling with Scott Thomas and Troy Cranney for places but at the same time striving for a strong combination in midfield.

HAJDUK WANDERERS SOCCER CLUB INC

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Do you want to be part of a successful club?
If your answer is yes, then Hajduk Wanderers is the one.
Due to our Youths also competing in Super Youth League all applications have been extended till the 14th September 2001.
All applicants must hold a minimum intermediate licence.
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Under 17's, Under 15, Under 14's & Under 13's

Cadet League Under 12's & Under 11's

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PO Box 200, PENDLE HILL. NSW. 2145.

OR BY FAX: 9609 6696
ENQUIRIES CONTACT: CHARLES ABDILLA
9757 2906 OR 0416 171 896
Applications close 5pm. 14th September, 2001.

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APPLICATIONS CLOSE FRIDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER

Soccer Prospectus and application forms are available from the school at Sutherland Street, Mascot **Ph: 02 9669 5118, Fax: (02) 9667 4902, or contact:**
Mr Jurij Sadowskyj or Mr David Toogood (Soccer Directors)
or Mr Jim Linton (Principal)
email: jjcahill-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

"Windows to our Future"

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Japan Offer Australia World Cup Training Site

Japan are so confident that Australia will qualify for the Japan and Korea 2002 FIFA World Cup it has sent five officials to make a special World Cup presentation to Soccer Australia.

The officials representing the Mimasaka Town Council, arrived in Australia last week, spending only one dney to make the presentation.

The town of Mimasaka is blessed with many hot springs and is located in the heart of western Japan tucked away between the mountains of the Okayama Prefecture.

Mimasaka has an exclusive sports complex that is not open to the public and allows total privacy for any type of preparation.

Okayama is known as the sunniest prefecture in Japan with a population of only 13,000.

The sports centre has five grass pitches. The main stadium has a capacity of 5,000 and is highly acclaimed among professional players to be one of the best grounds in western Japan.

Okayama is also keen to establish exchange Soccer Development programs, at all levels between Japan and Australia.

"I am very grateful to both chairman Ian Knop and Deputy Chairman Greg Woods for making the visitors from Japan feel most welcome at Soccer Australia," Alagich said.

Richard Alagich has made visits to Japan to do lectures, coaching courses and conduct coaching camps. He also has groups from Japan come to Australia, on a regular basis, for camps and coaching courses. It's from these contacts that the meting was arranged with Soccer Australia.

The picture shows the Japanese delegation at Soccer Australia (from left to right) Michihiko Tamba, Richard Alagich, Ian Holmes, Hiroyasu Nakagawa, Greg Woods, Jim Weder, Taisuke Okamoto and Masahiro Okazaki.

BLACKTOWN & DISTRICTS SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION Inc.

Blacktown Association invites quality players to trial for Season 2002.

NEW TRIAL DATES

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

Under 13 – Tuesday 25, Thursday 27, Friday 28 September 2001	6.00pm-7.30pm
Under 14 – Monday 24, Wednesday 26 September, Monday 1st October 2001	6.00pm-7.30pm
Under 15 – Monday 24, Wednesday 26, September, Monday 1st October 2001	7.30pm-9.00pm
Under 17 – Tuesday 25, Thursday 27, Friday 28 September 2001	7.30pm-9.00pm

JUNIOR LEAGUE

Under 11 – Tuesday 18, Thursday 20, Friday 21 September 2001
Under 12 – Monday 17, Wednesday 19, Friday 21 September 2001
6.30pm start

U14/U16 GIRLS YOUTH LEAGUE

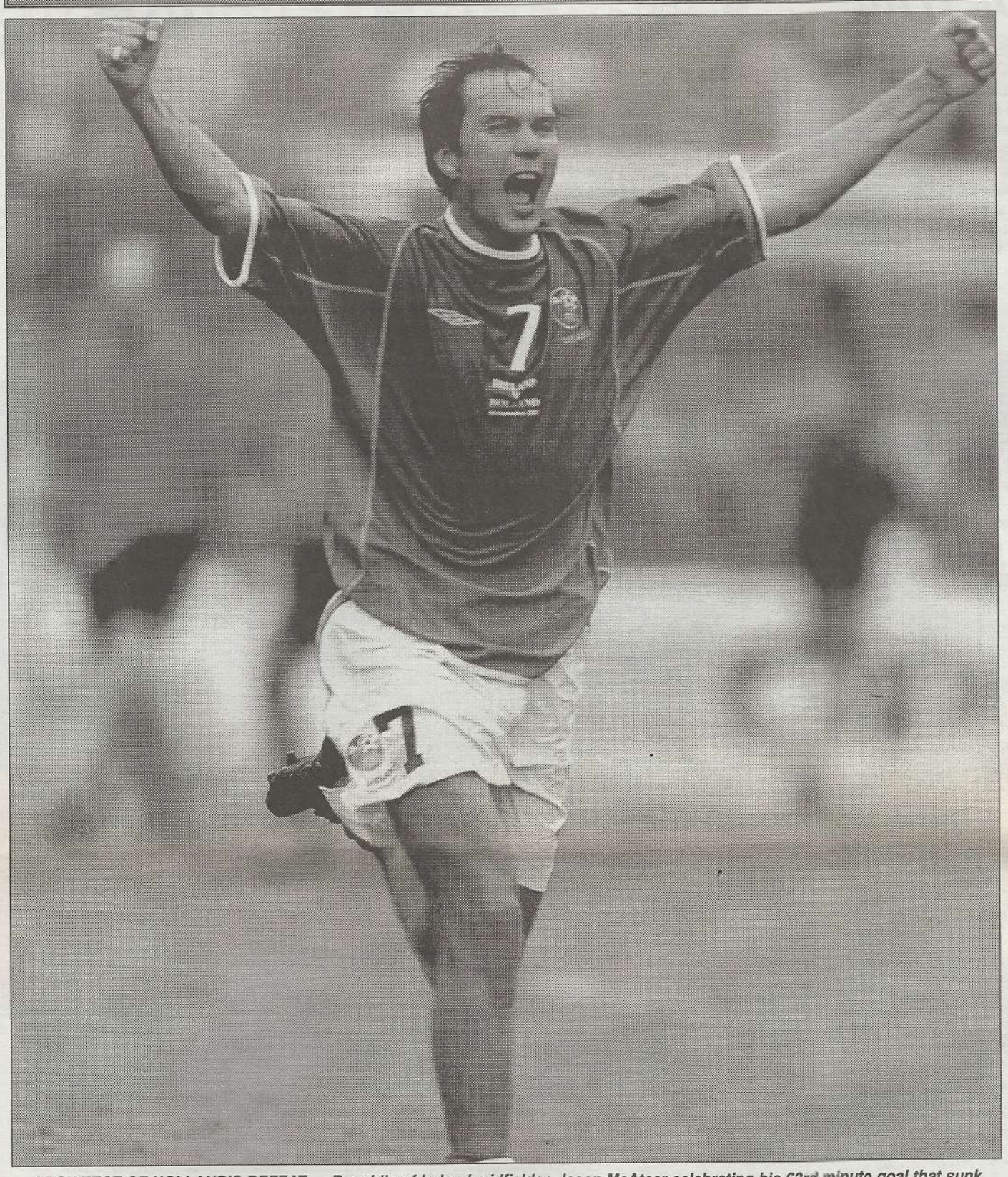
Sunday 23rd, 30th September, Sunday 7th, 14th October
U14, U16 Youth League Girls 10.00am start

U18's/1st GRADE STATE AMATEUR LEAGUE

U18's, 1st Grade State Premier League 12.00pm
Enquiries Jack Taylor 0408 406 717
Venue: Francis Park Richmond Rd, Blacktown
BDSFA Office 9672 1211

Applications are now invited for the following positions Super Youth League coaches and U14 & U16 girls coaches.
Full resumés and details to:
The Secretary,
P.O. Box 253,
DOONSIDE. NSW. 2767.

Letters to the Editor



ARCHITECT OF HOLLAND'S DEFEAT ... Republic of Ireland midfielder, Jason McAteer celebrating his 63rd minute goal that sunk Holland over the weekend in a 2002 World Cup qualifier.

The return of Commonsense

Dear Sir,

Good to see commonsense finally prevailed with the reinstatement of the Brisbane Strikers and Canberra Cosmos back into the National Soccer League. It is also good to hear that promotion and relegation is to be re-introduced back into the NSL.

This will stimulate all the state league competitions throughout Australia, putting more pressure on NSL clubs to perform on the field which ultimately means we will end up with a better product.

Promotion and relegation is traditionally a fact of life in club football all over the world, we cannot run a structured league like the AFL or NRL do, it just isn't soccer. Interest will now be created at both ends of the table with clubs in the bottom half battling away for survival in the competition which will create more tense matches because there is something very serious at stake to play for.

The NSL should be ultimately increased to 18 teams to accommodate three teams being relegated every year and replaced by three state league teams who have qualified via a home and away tournament involving all the state league champion teams. This would also allow for a longer playing season as our season at current is too short.

Gary Cerulli,
Oatlands NSW

IT'S GRAY, NOT GRAHAM FOR THE SAINTS

Dear Sir,

For the second time in as many editions (7th August, p21, "ABSW Forecasts - Southampton" and 14th August, p22, "Fulham, Porto, Saints chase Bierhoff") your paper has referred to the Southampton Manager as being Stuart Graham. The first occurrence of this glaring error might be explained away as an oversight, typographical error etc, but a second time, well that's just a lack of subject knowledge or the use of basic research skills on behalf of the Journalist and/or Editor.

I'm sure that the Gaffer at Southampton, Stuart Gray, would be most interested in meeting this mysterious and unknown Mr Graham.

Come on guys, if you want credibility as a soccer publication then it shouldn't be too much trouble for you to pay some attention to detail and demonstrate that you know who's who in the English Premier League. I'll bet you've never had trouble identifying the correct ManUtd Manager over the past few years, so why should Southampton be any different?

S. Rosier
Jamisontown, NSW

**The error is regretted.*

ARISE AND CHEER THE SOCCEROOS

Dear Sir,

We've won all the other trophies, so now let`s go for the biggest sporting trophy of all — the world cup of football.

Four years have passed since our last attempt, but our passion and desire only grows stronger. Another chapter is about to be written. It will be history in the making. The best thing about the game of soccer is being able to sing your country`s national anthem on the worldstage and in a sport that all the world plays.

Singing and chanting with over 100,000 brothers and sisters at the MCG will make it a celebration of the world game. It will be lovely to see all your faces again, and feel the passion in your hearts of green and gold.

As Bob Marley once said, "One Love". What a beautiful world it would be, and for one day in Melbourne it will be.Let our spirits unite as one to guide our team, the Socceroos to the World Cup of football. Wouldn`t it be great for our Soccerros to be there, next year at the World Cup once they are there, who knows what will happen?

I want all Aussie soccer supporters to report for national duty at the MCG as we prepare to march to victory. We all made a pledge four years ago that we would return in four years` time, now it is time tom honour that pledge as we try to conquer the mountain again.

Go Socceroos!
Paul Bottari,
Yokine, WA

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

PRESIDENT BOB SAVES FORCE

A ball has yet to be kicked in anger in the NSL 2001/2002 season, but Adelaide City Force has just won the most important game in their history. The name of this game was survival and the match- winning goal was scored by Adelaide City president Bob D'Ottavi.

City, one of the three remaining clubs from the NSL founding members, had recorded an operating loss of $883, 584 in the past financial year — a far worse result than the preceding $648, 816 of 1999/2000 season.

Auditor Natale Rugari painted a bleak picture in his report before declaring the proud club insolvent. Rugari highlighted alarming shortcomings in the club's operating indicators, citing a lack of strategic direction including appropriately documented policies, plans and forecasts such as forward budgets and cash flow projections.

The auditor also claimed a lack of sustainable operating profits or cash flow from core business activities.

Rugari sounded the final whistle with this conclusion, "It is my professional opinion that as at 30th June 2001 the club is insolvent and should cease trading."

But, the match spilled into extra-time when the auditor added, "However, there exists an Executed Deed of Guarantee and Indemnity between Roberto D'Ottavi and Adelaide City Force Soccer Club that Mr. Roberto D'Ottavi will provide surety to pay to the club the amount of any losses incurred by the club in the following three years."

D'Ottavi said the most recent result included $300,000 in sponsorship which the club did not receive due to "various circumstances."

He said the club had paid its bills and would go into the new season with a strong financial base, although it would need to further reduce costs.

"We are in a better position than it appears," D'Ottavi claimed. "Despite the depressed market, we have managed to survive, have no debts and players are being paid in full.

"The club will keep going much better from now on and we believe we will turn things around in the next 12-months.

"The National Soccer League wanted someone to guarantee the club — if I hadn't done that we wouldn't be in the league, D'Ottavi said.

The president has invested $1.2 million in the club in the past 15 months.

NEW SA COMMISSIONER

Gary Collis has been appointed as commissioner to the board of the South Australian Soccer Federation. A former player and avid Soccer fan, Collis has held the position of SA Government Employee Ombudsman since 1994.

"I look forward to the challenge of joining the board," Collis said.

"We have people of the right vision on the board and I believe that this is the right time to be involved."

CRISIS MEETING AT PORT ADELAIDE

Port Adelaide Lion, the oldest Soccer club in SA, has called a Special General Meeting at its John Hart Reserve, Ethelton club rooms on Saturday (September 8) at 1pm.

Club secretary Gene Lomman said the meeting has been called, "To ascertain the future of the club, as it is currently operating and indeed, perhaps the future to continue at all."

"We urge all current members, life members, players and others, who may have an interest in, or concern for our future to attend, as we need as much genuine help as we can get," Lomman said.

"At this meeting all of our cards will be laid on the table, so to speak, whereby it is envisaged that plans can be formulated for our future and the future of our game in the Port Adelaide and surrounding districts."

The Pirates are meeting day to day expenses, but were hurt badly when a pledged $16,000 sponsorship failed to materialise.

Lomman believes the success of the district's Aussie rules teams, Port Power in the AFL and Port Adelaide Magpies in the SANFL competition has impacted on the Soccer club.

"In our area you must be a winning team because Port people don't tolerate losers," he said.

"I also believe that the game has suffered since the demise of the West Adelaide Sharks.

"Around 30 per cent of West Adelaide supporters went to watch Adelaide City play when the Sharks were in the NSL, but since they disbanded, those supporters have deserted the game."

In an impassioned plea, Lomman reiterated — "All interested persons must attend the meeting and put their cases forward as far too many people have an opinion about everything, but when it comes to the "Nitty Gritty" they are never there because they are too busy with other matters.

"We ask, what is more important than the very future of the oldest surviving club in this state and the second oldest in Australia?

"The very basis of the game in this state could very well be lost without as much as a murmur if immediate action is not taken."

PORT STAR DIES

The SA Soccer fraternity is mourning the death of Ian (Chalky) White, 47.

He was a member of the Port Adelaide team that won the Federation Cup in 1979.

HE'S DONE IT AGAIN

Call him terrific, call him prolific. Michael Brooks has again topped the Premier League goalscoring list at the end of the minor round.

Brooksie hit the back of the net for the 30th time this league season when the Blue Eagles lost their final match of the minor round 2-4 to the young Adelaide City side.

Brooks was joined on the scorer's list by Frank Sergi, while Robbie Saraceno netted a brace for City, with supporting strikes from Adrian Pelligrino and Luke Deegan.

Meanwhile, in the other Monday night rescheduled game, Metro Stars came from behind to topple Playford Patriots 4-2.

Lee Robertson and Steve Kidd led the way for the Patriots before Metro replied with goals from Dino Sordillo (two), Tony Scalzi and Vince Schmizzi.

Michael Brooks (left): Atop the goalscorers' chart in the SA Premier League.

TOP SCORERS

30: Michael Brooks (Blue Eagles)
16: Corey Artone (Blue Eagles)
15: Robbie Saraceno (Adelaide City)
14: Nathan Day (Metro Stars)
12: Frank Sergi (Blue Eagles)
11: Jason Trimboli (Modbury Jets)
9: Joe Barbaro (Campbelltown City), Vince Schimizzi (Metro Stars)
8: Colin Isaacson (Modbury Jets), Drago Petrov (White City)
7: Michael Pirone (Croydon Kings), Luke Deegan (Adelaide City), John Christopoulos (Port Pirie)
6: Shane Pearce (Playford Patriots), Owen Filewood (Adelaide City), James Monie (Adelaide City)
5: Sam Farncombe (Playford Patriots), Sam McMillan (White City), Brad Hassell (Modbury Jets), Sam Monterosso (Campbelltown), Mark Yates (Modbury Jets).
4: Brad Armour (White City), Steve Locke (Port Pirie), Dino Sordillo (Metro Stars), Steve Kidd (Playford Patriots), Steve Parissos (Olympic FC), Simon Mitchell (White City).

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-8.30am, along with Phil Scardigno, Peter Millar, The Advertiser Soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and producer Robbie Popplestone.

Former Australian international and Adelaide City coach John Perin links up with Crisp for the SOS (Soccer On Sunday) program each Sabbath from 8.30am-9.30am to present the latest local, overseas and NSL scores and information.

Deakin forge ahead despite NSW snub

By Graham Cooke

Although denied a place in the NSW Premier League, Canberra Deakin will still be active during the summer, coach Vlado Horvat said.He plans to keep a squad together through the spring until Christmas.

"They will be mostly developing players from our junior ranks," he said.

"We will play matches on a regular basis — Canberra Cosmos youth, the ACT Academy, the AIS, teams from Sydney — basically anyone who is willing to give us a game.

"My target is to develop young talent for next season and beyond. That should be the aim of the club. It is very nice to bring in lots of experienced players and maybe win the ACT Premiership, but it is not going to take the club on to the next stage."

Horvat said he was disappointed Deakin had been turned down for the expanded NSW Premier League.

"We had ambitious plans which would have involved a more extensive administration, but that is on hold at the moment," he said.

The club was looking at other options, including applying for the NSW winter competition, or joining the Illawarra league.

Vlado Horvat: Deakin coach.

Meanwhile, Deakin's plans to finance ground improvements by selling off part of Deakin Oval for a town house development has met with opposition from local residents and at least one member of the ACT Legislative Assembly.

A decision is expected by late October, but Greens MLA Kerrie Tucker said she was referring the matter to the Auditor-General for investigation after the Deakin Residents Association said it had uncovered 'a litany of administrative, procedural and legal shortcomings' in the deal between Deakin and the Government.

However Deakin board member Tony Pratezina denied there had been any wrongdoing and Horvat said the feeling around the club was that work on the redevelopment could begin before Christmas.

PLAYFORD PATRIOTS' PERFECT PERFORMANCE

By Allan Crisp

Playford Patriots christened their new name with great gusto and immense pride when they upset white-hot favourites the Adelaide Blue Eagles to grab the West End Cup Final 3-0 on Saturday at Hindmarsh Stadium.

During its 42-season history under its former Elizabeth City badge, the northern club had never won the SA knock-out trophy.

Shane Pearce emerged as Patriots match winning hero, netting a superb hat-trick to add to the six league goals he scored during the home and away league campaign.

The success was a triumph for Playford coach Alby Kidd, who designated young giant Sam Farncombe the task of blotting ace Eagles striker Michael Brooks off the scoring list.

"Overall it was a great team effort and a super game by Sam Farncombe," Kidd said. "Brooks didnít have a shot at goal, so it paid off," the former West Adelaide coach added.

Despite the absence through suspension of playmaker Corey Artone, the Blues began purposefully as Marcin Kierno and captain

Joe Cutillo interchanged passes expertly with Kierno ending the move by forcing Playford goalkeeper David Miller into a first minute save.

Kierno looked determined to atone for the loss of Artone by shooting on sight of the goal. The lanky midfielder was unlucky in the 27th minute when his piledriver struck team-mate Frank Sergi and was deflected off target.

Thereafter, however, Kiddís tactics of funneling defenders back and hitting on the break, reaped its dividends.

Patience and composure were employed as Steve Kidd, son of the coach, crossed from the right for Pearce to nod in the breakthrough goal just two minutes from half time.

It was 2-0 three minutes after the interval as a drive from Pearce speared under the body of startled Eagles goalkeeper Gino DeLucia.

Pearce posted his hat-trick in the 65th minute when he finished a fine team effort to complete a move from evergreen midfielder Mark Brazzale.

Veteran , striker Theo Anastasiou told Alby Kidd after the final that the big game would signal his swan song. Kidd said he would like to keep the former State team man at the club in a coaching capacity.

WEST END CUP FINAL

Playford Patriots 3
(Pearce 43, 47, 65)
Blue Eagles 0

PLATFORD PATRIOTS: Miller, Thomson, Robertson, Farncombe, Brazzale, Bell, Childs (DeMella 73), Anastasiou (87), Kidd, Pearce, Mignone. Subs not used: Colgrove, Henry, Crawford, Radford.

BLUE EAGLES: DeLucia, Deleso, Sergi, Cutillo, Castello (Manzarapis 56), Dacic Ferrante 72), Brooks, Senesi, T. Giannitto, Zito (Sgro 72), Kierno. Sub not used: Spinelli.

Man of the match: Sam Farncombe (Playford Patriots).

Referee: David Alberton.

Constantine shares finest hour with heart donor

Former Soccer Australia and NSW Soccer Federation boss, John Constantine last week dedicated his Soccer Hall of Fame award to the organ donor who saved his life back in 1998.

"It's three years to the day when I had my heart transplant. I dedicate this honour to my family for all of their suffering, but specially to the family of the young donor who made it possible for me to be here to receive this award," he reflected.

"It is also in recognition of those volunteers, parents and family members who take their kids to Soccer each weekend and go for years without any real recognition," he added.

Constantine's career included NSW Federation President and member of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Bid Committee.

Constantine, Basil Scarsella, national coach, Frank Farina and Alan Davidson were named last week as members of the top category of Australian Soccer honours.

Constantine and Scarsella were inducted into the Hall of Honour and Farina and Davidson into the Hall of Champions while Scarsella was the Australian Soccer team manager to the Barcelona Olympics and a long serving South Australian and national administrator.

John Constantine: Dedicates his award to the organ donor who saved his life.

"Because of my health problems, I was never sure I would ever see the day when I would be recognised," said a grateful Constantine.

Scarsella, Oceania Football Confederation President, said he was honoured to be in the company of people he believed had contributed more than he had.

Farina, who described his honour as unexpected, made 86 appearances for Australia and was Belgium's leading scorer when he switched to European Soccer.

"It's a great honour, and it makes me feel comfortable with everything I have done and achieved," he said.

The 76 times capped player and former Socceroo captain who had a successful stint with English top club Nottingham Forest, said he was shocked by his selection.

"To be in such a select group of so many famous players, past and present, is a real honour. I am so proud and so are my sons who are playing this world game," he said.

Other prominent players who were inducted include former Australian women's captain Patricia O'Connor and Socceroos Tony Henderson, Jim Tansey, David Ratcliffe and former Austrian international Leo Baumgartner.

Among the non-players are referees Doug Rennie and Arthur Roberts, coach Bill Vrolyks, schools Cup founder Bill Turner and State officials George Wallace and Charlie Caruso.

SPIRIT UNVEILS FAMILY TICKETS

Northern Spirit has released its ticket prices, season ticket packages and membership packages as the battle to restore the crowds that saw Northern Spirit the hottest ticket in Sydney sport two years ago moves into full swing.

The first match of the NSL season is against Parramatta Power at Parramatta Stadium on October 6 before the home support of Northern Spirit will be tested for the first time against Newcastle United at North Sydney Oval on October 12.

Northern Spirit has therefore announced a versatile family pass as well as cheaper admission for children and more exciting membership benefits as part of its 2001/02 packages.

An adult general admission ticket for the 2001/02 season costs $14 with kids admitted to the ground for $6, less than last season's price.

The general admission tickets also include a new family concession, which sees adults entry at $12 and kids entry slashed to $4 each if they come as a family. One adult and one child costs $16, two adults and two children will cost $32.

Junior Soccer players in the Manly Warringah, Ku-ring-gai and Gladesville-Hornsby areas can also receive free entry to all matches at North Sydney Oval by sending in their Loyalty Card forms.

Season tickets for general admission cost $144.10 for 13 games — a saving of $42 and for children a season pass will cost just $64.10, a saving of $18.

Even greater savings can be made by taking out a grandstand season ticket with $54 slashed off the price of a seat in the O'Reilly Grandstand for season ticket holders. The cost is $184.10. For children, a grandstand season ticket costs $104.10, a saving of $30.

Membership packages, which have been substantially boosted for the 2001/02 season, cost $35 for adults (Club Spirit) and $35 for kids (Official Young Supporters Club — OYSC). This season all Club Spirit members will be admitted to a Meet the Players function after every home game in the Mollie Dive Stand at North Sydney Oval, as well as a Northern Spirit hat, key ring, mouse mat, bumper sticker, membership card and a team poster.

OYSC members will receive a gym bag, wallet, mouse mat, official team contract, sticker, membership card, official team poster and a birthday card — complete with two free tickets to a Spirit game — and the chance to be the Matchday Mascot at home matches.

To purchase season tickets or membership packages, contact Northern Spirit Headquarters on 9460 2187.

POWER, SYDNEY OLYMPIC LOCK HORNS IN PRE-SEASON SHOWDOWN

Parramatta Power will play a friendly against Sydney Olympic tonight, Tuesday September 4 at Fraser Park in Marrickville, kicking off at 6.30pm.

A venue has not been decided. The game will climax the series of friendly matches lined-up for the team as its wind-up its preparations for the new 2001-2002 NSL season.

Over the weekend, Power players battled freezing conditions in Lithgow to beat the Lithgow District select team 9-0 in the final game of the team's three-day country visit.

The Power managed a clean sweep in all games with the first team also beating the Orange District select team 9-0 on Friday night at Orange Waratah Oval.

The Youth League team also showed true winning spirit when it hammered the Orange District U/19 7-1. The youngsters continued their onslaught in Lithgow, crushing its junior representatives 9-0 at Marjorie Jackson Reserve.

It was the first time the entire Power full-time squad had travelled together.

"The team spirit is great and the boys really seemed to enjoy themselves," Assistant Coach, Lawrie McKinna said.

"Many of the young players have never trained or played together so it was important to try different combinations."

Goal scorers for the first team included English trialist Justin Perry who scored a hat-trick in both games, Lubo Lapsansky scored two against Lithgow, while Damien Brown scored two against Orange.

The Power's team activity was later cancelled the following day because of snowy conditions in Blackheath.

Damien Brown: On target for Parramatta Power during their tour of Lithgow and Orange.

Bill Turner Grand Final for Sept. 12

The Bill Turner Cup (Boys) and Bill Turner Trophy (Girls) High Schools Soccer Competition has reached a crucial stage of the season with teams arriving in the Hunter Valley on Tuesday September 11, 2001 for a Civic Reception at the City of Lake Macquarie Council Chambers to be hosted by the Mayor John Kilpatrick at 11.00am.

The Semi-Finals, to be played at Jack McLaughlan Oval, Edgeworth commence at 3.00pm the same day. The Grand Finals and Third Place Play-Offs will be held on Wednesday September 12 at the same venue.

Tuesday September 11, 2001
(10.00am) - Civic Reception at City of Lake Macquarie Council Chambers

SOUTH GRAFTON V CESSNOCK
(3.00pm) - 1st Semi-Final Bill Turner Trophy (Girls)

WESTFIELDS SPORTS HIGH V CROOKWELL
(4.30pm) - 2nd Semi-Final Bill Turner Trophy (Girls)

PALM BEACH-CURRUMBIN V HUNTER SPORTS HIGH
(6.00pm) - 1st Semi-Final LG Bill Turner Cup (Boys)

CONCORD V HOLY SPIRIT, BELLAMBI
(7.30pm) - 2nd Semi-Final LG Bill Turner Cup (Boys)

Wednesday September 12, 2001
(3.00pm) - Third Place Play-Off (Girls)
(4.15pm) - Third Place Play-Off (Boys)
(5.45pm) - Grand Final Bill Turner Trophy (Girls)
(7.30pm) - Grand Final LG Bill Turner Cup (Boys)

Moreira to lace boots for Adelaide

Northern Spirit's Brazilian ace, Alex Moreira, is now bound for Adelaide City Force on a free transfer. The Brazilian opted for Adelaide, after shunning interest from another Sydney clubside, Parramatta Power.

Moriera linked up with Force in his desire to work with Adelaide's legendary and highly-respected coach Zoran Matic.

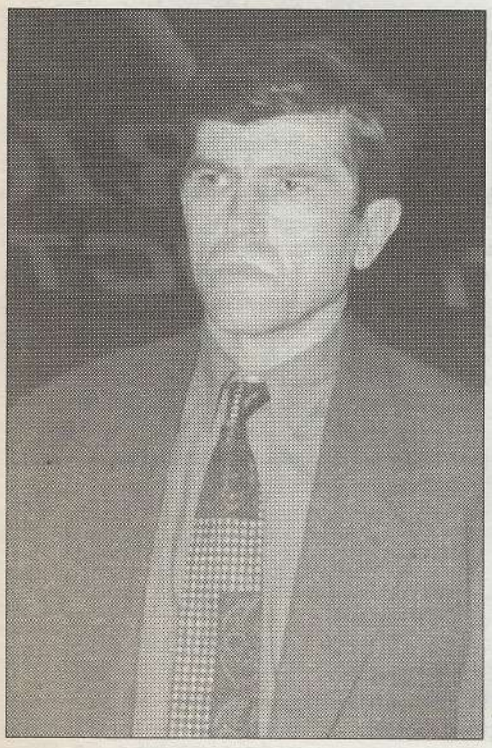
Speaking on his odyssey at Spirit, Moreira maintained that, "I enjoyed my time at Northern Spirit, but I don't think I did myself any justice". The striker added that he actually had a disastrous single season with the Northern Spirit despite the fact that he eventually recorded an impressive total of 30 NSL goals.

Moriera was initially thought to have been considering offers from Portugal and Belgium, before eventually changing his mind to remain in the NSL.

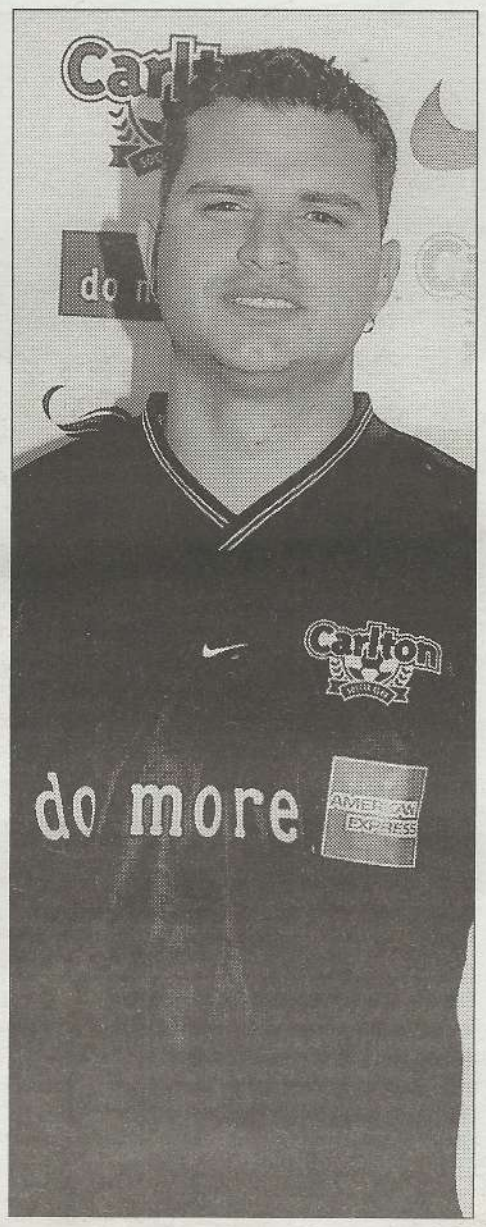
"I want to show the South Australian public who Alex Moreira is! I cannot wait to play at Hindmarsh," he declared, adding that "Zoran Matic has traditionally played his team in a way that his strikers have scored plenty of goals.

"They missed out on the finals last season and for them, that is something that they are not used to. I want to win and they want to be successful, so that is a good sign.

"I am very excited to join Adelaide City, in fact I cannot wait to start training with them", he concluded last week in Adelaide.



Zoran Matic: Thrilled with the acquisition of Moreira.



Alex Moreira: Glad to be at Adelaide City Force.

Merrick seeks $.2m as coaching row engulfs Matildas

By Roy Hay

Controversy never seems far away from soccer these days and the latest eruption involves the Australian Womens Soccer team, the Matildas, and the national coaching position. Headlines were made this month when Canberra Cosmos sacked its Uruguayan coach after 27 days in charge, without ever taking charge of a game. Women's Soccer sacked its coach before he had met the players and is now about to advertise for a replacement.

Last year the Head Coach of the soccer program at the Victorian Institute of Sport, Ernie Merrick, was offered a four year contract by the Australian Institute of Sport (financed through the Australian Sports Commission) and Australian Women's Soccer Association on 22 December 2000 as National Women's coach and AIS Soccer Head Womens Coach. He followed in the footsteps of Tom Sermanni who left to be assistant coach to the Bay City Cyber Rays, which has just won the inaugural Womens Professional Soccer League in the United States thanks to a penalty shoot out goal by Australian star Julie Murray.

Ernie Merrick: Asking for compensation.

Former National League player Greg Brown then took over and he was replaced by Chris Tansey, who was in charge during the Sydney Olympic games in which the Matildas went out in the first round. Adrian Santrac, formerly with Adelaide City and West Adelaide, then became acting coach of the Matildas, but Merrick was to take over the reins after a series of three matches with the French national team in January.

Merrick attended the tournament as an observer and planned his campaign. In fact he was sacked by the AWSA without, in his words, "ever meeting the team". Merrick has issued a writ claiming breach of contract and infringements of the Trade Practices Act and seeking compensation of $200,000.

Merrick is probably the most highly qualified coach in Australia, having obtained the High Performance Coaching certificate and recently completing the European Professional Licence course in Scotland, where he was among only the second group to undertake this qualification. Everton manager Walter Smith was in the first group.

Merrick has been invited to Scotland in October to receive his certificate. His record at the VIS has been exceptional producing several players for the national Under-17, Under-19, Olyroo and senior Socceroo squads in recent years. It was clear that he would have brought new standards to the under-performing Matildas, including a fitness program that would have brought them to the level of the Hockeyroos, the benchmark for women's sporting teams in Australia.

Australian Women's Soccer Association Media Officer Janene Mar was not prepared to comment and Chief Executive Officer Warren Fisher was unavailable for comment.

Deakin pip Juventus in Premiers run-in

By Graham Cooke

Gungahlin Juventus' hopes of snatching the ACT Minor Premiership from Canberra Deakin on the last day of the regular season evaporated in eight minutes of spectacular second-half action with Deakin winning 4-2 at Kaleen Oval on Sunday.

Kaleen, converted to soccer as a training pitch for the Olympic Games, has seen some of the world's finest players, but little to compare with the comeback engineered by the veteran Deakin pair of Tony Lemezina and Marko Perinovic.

With 64 minutes gone and Juventus grimly hanging on to their 2-0 half-time lead, Lemezina turned a defender, collected a rebound and drove in a shot which deflected past goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca.

Three minutes later Perinovic crossed from the right and Lemezina lashed a volley from three metres out into the roof of the net.

Then Perinovic began the move that ended with Lemezina touching the ball on for the incoming Ivan Zelic to score.

A moment earlier Juventus' Matt Valeri had gone down in a heavy tackle. He was still on the ground when the goal was scored and was then taken from the field on a stretcher.

With three minutes left Geoff Howarth completed Juventus' agony by scoring Deakin's fourth.

It had been a different story in the first half, with Deakin looking ponderous and one-paced as Juventus built up a 2-0 lead.

First Mils Sredojevic drove a low shot past Barney Smith, then Steve Lazzari cracked in another low drive from the edge of the box just out of reach of the diving goalkeeper.

Belconnen United gave themselves a chance of retaining the premiership by taking the fourth finals spot with a 3-0 win over Weston Creek Royals. The result doomed the Royals to last place on the ladder.

Severely depleted by suspensions and injury, United had 15-year-old Adam Casey in their line-up and the youngster repaid the faith shown in him by coach Oscar Langone with two goals.

Langone said Casey had been in England trialling for Premier League club Southampton. ìHe hadn't played in the first team before, but I had a feeling he would not let us down,î Langone said. Robbie Schroder was Belconnen's other scorer.

The next test for Belconnen will be the erratic Canberra Olympic in the minor semi-final next week. Olympic, who have blown hot and cold all season, thrashed the University of Canberra 7-1 with goals from Toplica Popovich (2), Njegosh Popovich, Keith Mikaikatis, Danny Macor, Justin Guidnot and coach Baz Giampaolo.

Capital City Suns and Monaro played out their season with a 2-2 draw. Shane Lyons and Dion Cannel, from the penalty sport, gave the Suns a 2-0 lead but Ilja Prenzoski and Jimmy Baxter scored in the second half to earn Monaro a share of the points. Monaro finished with nine men, Lazar Simeonov and Bruno Monterosso both receiving their marching orders from referee Ben Williams.

ACT PREMIERSHIP (FINAL)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canberra Deakin	16	13	2	1	60	12	41
Gungahlin Juventus	16	12	0	4	56	16	36
Canberra Olympic	16	9	3	4	41	19	30
Belconnen United	16	9	1	6	31	21	28
Capital City Suns	16	7	3	6	40	36	24
Monaro	16	7	2	7	25	29	23
University of Canberra	16	4	1	11	20	58	13
Tuggeranong United	16	2	2	12	21	48	8
Weston Creek Royals	16	2	0	14	12	68	6

Melbourne's Souths, Knights aim for NSL top six

By Bert van Bedaf

With the demise of Carlton and Morwell's Eastern Pride, there are only two Melbourne clubs flying the flag for Victoria as the fixtures for the 2001-2002 NSL season were released last week.

It is up to the Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne, both former champions, to carry fame, fortune and excitement into a new season that starts on October 5 and in Melbourne with South Melbourne playing at home against Perth Glory at Bob Jane stadium on Sunday, October 7.

South will stick with its 6pm Sunday kick-offs, while the Knights aim for Saturday night festivities at 7.30.

The Knights have their first home game on Saturday, October 13, but their ground is yet to be approved at Knights stadium, Sunshine.

Soccer Australia has not penciled in a venue on the fixture list. Rather, the Knights home games carry the rider, "Use of the club`s venue, Knights stadium at Somers St, Sunshine, is subject to final confirmation that the necessary upgrading of the facility has been completed to the satisfaction of Soccer Australia in accordance with a previous decision of the NSL Tribunal."

It is a legacy of last season's finals fiasco, when Knights fans attacked players and the coach of the opposing team, Perth Glory, in the first-leg elimination final. It became the subject of investigation and disciplinary action. The Knights must upgrade security at its home ground before Soccer Australia allows matches to be played at the Sunshine venue.

"We have brought in an independent security company who has conducted an audit of the ground. We are tightening up security procedures and we`re putting in place guarantees for players' safety entering and leaving the changing rooms," Knights general manager Robert Hrzic said.

"The final inspection by Soccer Australia is this week. We hope it will be a formality, but we`re not overly concerned about it," he said.

The round 20 "home" match of the Knights against Perth on February 23, 2002, must be scheduled " for a venue outside the Melbourne metropolitan area, in accordance with a decision of the NSL Tribunal, as approved by Soccer Australia," it is stated on the SA fixtures.

"We could take the match to regional Victoria," Hrzic suggested. "Or somewhere like Tasmania or the Northern Territory that don`t have national league soccer," he said.

All in all, NSL soccer in Victoria this season offers grim and thin pickings. Proof of Victoria`s dearth of involvement is the gaping hole in round 21. There`s no match in Melbourne for the weekend of March 2-3, 2002, when both Melbourne clubs are away.

The Melbourne sides are scheduled for their derbies in round 5 on November 4 at South Melbourne and in round 18 on February 9, 2002, at the Knights.

South`s "grand final replays" against Wollongong Wolves are at home in round 12 on December 23 and away in round 25 on March 28, 2002.

Last season`s coach Mike Petersen will meet up with his former side South Melbourne in round two when his new club the Kingz host the Lakesiders. The Kingz visit Bob Jane stadium in round 15.

South coach Eddie Krncevic will need to rebuild a side after an exodus of experienced players, but he's confident of assembling a strong squad. "We've still got a good core of players at the club. We`ll need to sign three or four players, someone up front, in midfield and possibly in defence," Krncevic said.

So far, Krncevic has signed Peter Buljan, from Perth Glory. Fortunately for South, stalwart Mehmet Durakovic is ready to stay

Andrew Marth: Stiff challenge facing Knights' new player-coach.

"I've agreed. All that needs to be done is for me to sign," the experienced defender said.

Durakovic, 35, turned down an offer from the Kingz. "The offer was excellent, but my family comes first," he said.

Knights player-coach Andrew Marth has mounted an early purge with established players Ransford Banini, Dragi Nastevski and Jason Vukadin axed.

Marth has put his faith in three 17-year-olds. They are youth defender Daniel Piorkowski, striker Daniel Debevc from VPL team Green Gully, and Knights youth midfielder Daniel Rocco.

"This club can`t compete with what others clubs are paying and I've had to look at youth, but I believe with Steve Horvat and myself in the team, we`ll still have enough experience. We have a good first eleven and we`ll aim for the top six," Marth said.

South finished minor premier last season but lost the grand final, while the Knights came to grief in the second finals round.

Both sides again aim to have claimed a top six position to contest the championship finals at the end of 26 rounds and possibly a grand final berth on the weekend of 11-12 May, 2002.

This is a 14-club league, after all, when Soccer Australia readmitted Brisbane Strikers and Canberra Cosmos after initially having eliminated them in its previously determined culling process to reduce the league from 16 to 12 clubs.

But there may be surprises. Marconi Stallions are in financial strife and Canberra is back in the firing line. SA chairman Ian Knop is said to be unhappy with the situation. There's also a suggestion to league may return to 16 clubs next season.

Meanwhile, coming season's home rounds for Melbourne's title hopes are the Melbourne Knights:

R2 Adelaide City Force 13/10/01,
R4 Brisbane Strikers 27/10/01,
R6 Marconi Stallions 9/11/01,
R8 Kingz FC 21/11/01,
R10 Canberra Cosmos 8/12/01,
R13 Parramatta Power 5/01/02,
R14 Newcastle United 12/01/02,
R16 Olympic Sharks 26/01/02,
R18 South Melbourne 9/02/02,
R20 Perth Glory 23/02/02,
R22 Sydney United 9/3/02,
R24 Wollongong Wolves 23/03/02,
R25 Northern Spirit 30/3/02.

South Melbourne Games

R1 Perth Glory 7/10/01,
R3 Sydney United 21/10/01,
R5 Melbourne Knights 4/11/01,
R7 Parramatta Power 18/11/01,
R9 Adelaide City Force 02/12/01,
R11 Brisbane Strikers 14/12/01,
R12 Wollongong Wolves 23/12/01,
R15 King FC 20/01/02,
R17 Canberra Cosmos 3/02/02,
R19 Northern Spirit 17/02/02,
R23 Olympic Sharks 17/03/21,
R26 Marconi Stallions 7/04/02.

SOCCER WOMAN

BY JANENE MAR

Nationals Extravaganza in Coffs Harbour

Nine State teams will converge on Coffs Harbour in northern NSW for this year's edition of the WSA National Junior Championship and WSA National Youth Championship — Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, NSW Country, Northern NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

The two are again being staged together as a combined event, following the success of that format last year.

Play kicks off this Sunday 9 September at the Coffs Harbour International Sports Stadium, with the champions to be decided the following Saturday.

YOUNG MATILDAS HOPEFULS

There is certainly plenty to play for. Teams of course will fight it out for the honour of a championship title. Additionally this year, the opportunity is there to make an impression on selectors for national team honours.

With the news of FIFA's latest world event - the Women's World Youth Championship - a stellar performance this week may indeed launch the international careers of Young Matildas hopefuls. The inaugural world Under 19 event is scheduled for next August/September in Canada, with Australia first to qualify via Oceania in Tonga, this coming April.

With April not all that far away, new National Youth Coach Mike Mulvey has headed just the one competition to date - the Central Coast series a month ago - and has had little chance to take a first-hand look at players outside that team of nineteen who played in Gosford.

This week, he will be assisted by the newly formed WSA Technical Study Group to provide every player the opportunity of being seen at this championship and considered for such honours. And its not only the Youth players who will be under the microscope. With selections always an ongoing process, the Juniors can make this their first steps towards a target of subsequent World Youth Championships.

Player assessments will be made in every match of both age levels by the study group, and a few days after the tournament, a National Youth Team Squad (the Young Matildas), and a National Youth Team Train-On Squad (the Junior Matildas) will be named. Whilst each will consist of 22 players, this will be a starting point only, with ongoing assessments and reviews undertaken, particularly in the lead-up to April's qualifiers.

AGE GROUPS

The age groups for this year remain the same as last year at 14s and 17s. Age eligibility criteria for the 2001 Championships is therefore - players born in 1987 or later for Junior; players born in 1984 or later for Youth.

However, with the World Youth Championship confirmed to be staged every two years, a proposal for the WSA National Championships age groups to correspond accordingly has been put forward and should be instituted come the WSA national meetings in October.

YOUTH CONTENDERS

The South Australians

Matildas' Sarah Cooper

scooped the pool at last year's Youth Championship, finishing top on points before scraping through on penalties in the final, whilst playmaker Stacey Stocco was voted MVP. This time around, without the leadership and experience of Stocco in the middle of the park, and just four of the 2000 winning side returning, they will find the going tough.

2000 runners-up Northern NSW should come close to claiming the Youth crown this year, avenging last year's loss where they were unlucky to go down in the shootout.

They boast no less than six national youth team reps from this year's Gosford event and/or the 2000 adidas Cup team - Amber Neilson, Katie Gill, Zoe Betteridge, Harmonie Attwill, Lorissa Stevens, and Hayley Crawford.

Many of the team also have extensive national league experience, and the performance of 'veteran' playmaker Neilson plus the team's consistency throughout the week will be key factors for this powerful outfit.

Equal favourites would be NSW, with six Young Matildas from the Gosford tournament - Collette McCallum, Catherine Cannuli, Justine McLaughlin, Emma Davison, Kathryn Collins, and Nikki Pichon - plus several others who impressed in that same event playing for the NSWIS. Although with less national league experience than Northern, the sheer class of the likes of McCallum and Cannuli may prove the difference.

Queensland as always will present a formidable opposition against all teams, led by Young Matildas Lana Harch, Karla Reuter, and Elissia Canham, and may be the quiet achievers. Victoria are capable of causing the odd upset, with several national league players in their ranks. At the heart of their campaign will be the dynamic Selin Kuralay, and Young Matilda Caroline Saville.

ACT may find it difficult against the big name sides. NSW Country have a solid core of talent eager to prove their worth in this their rare opportunity before the selectors. Tasmania and WA will be spirited outfits and enjoy competing against their more fancied opponents.

JUNIOR PROSPECTS

Predicting the top performers in the Juniors is a more difficult task, with obviously a much greater percentage of first-time State reps, and this a relatively new and youngest ever age group.

Defending champions NSW retain five of their 2000 side, although key players from last year Leah Blayney, Catherine Cannuli, and Kylie Ledbrook are now too old for Juniors. Last year's runners-up Queensland have a similar situation, with their three All-Star selections no longer in the side, and just two remaining from the 2000 team.

After their impressive performances last year which won them the Association Trophy (top of the points ladder, although in a 2-pool format), NSW Country are this time out to prove they are finals material. They competed in the Kanga Cup in Canberra during July and won the Under 16 division hands down. Key players include Cian Maciejewski, Amy Chapman, and Sally Shippard.

As for the remaining six teams, we will just have to wait and see exactly what unfolds over the week's competition.

WHAT: WSA National Junior & Youth Championships
WHEN: 9 - 15 September 2001
WHERE: Coffs Harbour International Sports Stadium, Hogbin Drive, Coffs Harbour
WHO: ACT, NSW, NSW Country, Northern NSW, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA
KICK-OFF: Sun 9 Sept - Opening 8.30am - Juniors 9.30am - Youth 9.45am
FINALS: Sat 15 Sept - Junior 12noon - Youth 2pm

Grateful Tiatto hosts Man City fans

Aussie international mid-fielder, Danny Tiatto, the Manchester City fans choice as the star player of the year last season, along with teammate Steve Howey hosted the club's fans last week at the club's Superstore in the heart of the Manchester.

Tiatto and Howey conducted signing sessions for over two hours as about 300 Manchester City fans brought club shirts to the venue for autographing.

Tiatto emerged the unanimous choice of the club fans in the team's ill-fated return to the premiership, despite the fact that it was only his first season at the club.

Steve Howey, in his first season at Maine Road, from Newcastle was second to Tiatto in the "Player of the Year" polls. Tiatto initialled his signature on his No 19 shirt, which most of the fans brandished, as well other souvenirs and mementoes brought to the venue. The lively ceremony also saw Tiatto shaking hands with many fans as well as having photoshoots.

Despite the fact that he was sent off twice for two bookable offences last season, he still emerged the unanimous choice of the supporters for City's Player of the Year - due largely to his fighting spirit and total commitment to the cause of the club.

He thanked the fans for their belief in him and on behalf of the rest of the team, vowed to do their bets to return the club back the premiership. According to him, there was a new air of determination and drive within the club, now under the tutelage of ex-England manager, Kevin Keegan.

Tiatto joined City for £300,000 from Swiss club, FC Baden in July 1998 after an impressive loan spell at Stoke City and ex-coach Joe Royle saw the Australian international as the solution to the club's troublesome left back position

In the words of Royle then, "We needed a left sided quite seriously. Since Terry Phelan left the club a number of years ago we haven't had a recognised left back of the standard that we needed, someone who can give us width, someone who can get up and down that left hand side and put a cross in, Danny played for Stoke last season and impressed me."

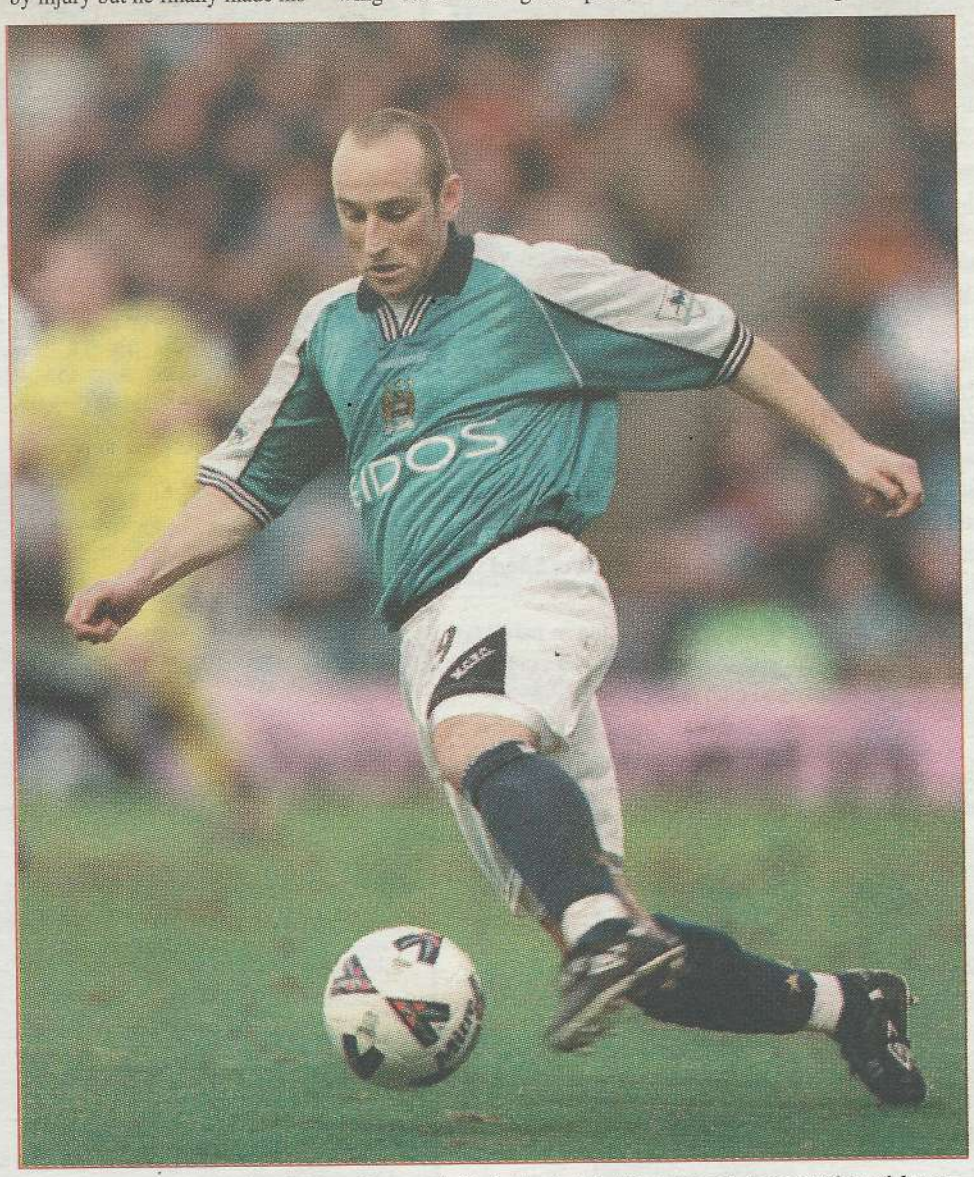
"He can play left back in a 4-4-2, he can play left-wingback and even left midfield tucked in there, he has in football terms a good motor, he can get up and down all day and there's quality from his left foot so we needed the balance on left hand side."

"There was interest from the Premiership but he is relatively unknown in this country but he did play in Serie B for two seasons and I think at £300,000 he represents excellent value."

NEVER SAY DIE ... Tiatto tussles with Tottenham Hotspurs' Ukrainian star, Sergei Rebrov, last season in the premiership.

His progress at the start of the 1998-99 season was hampered by injury but he finally made his debut in the league against Walsall on September 2nd. He proved to be a natural attacking wing back with great pace, though he himself admits that Joe had to keep reminding him that his first duty is to defend.

His attacking flair was demonstrated with great style when he scored the equalizer at Pride Park in the Worthington Cup 2nd Round first leg tie against Derby.



ALL ROUND PERFORMER ... Danny Tiatto in typical battling mood, has continued from where he left off for Manchester City, this season.

A great squad player, he was delighted to sign for City. Ultimately, he was to play a key role as City blitzed the rest of the first division on their way to promotion into the elite premier league in May 2000. He was ever present in the side to the end of the season keeping veteran Danny Granville on the bench.

Joe Royle has praised his attitude at the start of the new 2000-2001 season as he gave him a permanent run in the team at the beginning of the new season.

Even though he signed as a left full back, but as the Premiership season unfolded the Aussie started to show natural flair and edge on the left side of midfield. His darting runs were a constant threat to the oppostion, his pace and agression became a vital part of City's game plan.

Scored a crucial goal at Southampton and a second against Liverpool at the end of January, but was denied a great goal at Middlesbrough on the end of one of his runs when the referee adjudged another City player to be offside.

Kevin Keegan: Manchester City's current coach.

After a brief period on the bench, Tiatto again claimed his place at the start of March and played a vital role in the run-in to the end of the season, which unfortunately wasn't enough to save City from relegation.

This time around, once again, Tiatto remains an integral part of Keegan's rebuilding efforts which has started-off well, in an attempt to return this proud club back the premier league where they rightfully belong.

**Courtesy, Manchester City FC News*

"... He has in football terms a good motor, he can get up and down all day and there's quality from his left foot..."

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Results go to the Wire

By Bert van Bedaf

State League division one clubs Whittlesea Stallions and Fitzroy City are on the verge of promotion to the Victorian Premier League next season. But third-placed Oakleigh Cannons is hot on their trail and with fourth-placed Westvale also in the hunt, the final outcome will go to the wire, with plenty of permutations.

The Stallions currently lead the competition on 43 points, a point ahead of Fitzroy City. But Oakleigh Cannons is hard on their heals on 41 points and still has a chance to clinch a premier league berth depending on results in the last round next week.

Fitzroy City is expected to register a comfortable win at home to the relegated Sunshine Georgies. Once a mighty team in the national soccer league and a force in the premier league, the Georgies are rapidly sliding into the lower ranks of Victorian soccer.

Whittlesea Stallions are at home to Westvale, who are on 39 points and could reach 42 points with an outside chance of clinching promotion. Westvale will prove a difficult opponent and could pose a danger match for the Stallions. The Cannons visit Frankston Pines, who are in sixth spot.

Assuming Fitzroy can register a win and move up to the VPL next season, the Cannons must win to have a chance. But Whittlesea must also win. A Stallions draw would see the Cannons, if they win, go through on goal difference. With a record 60 goals scored, the Oakleigh side could not have chosen a better nickname.

If Fitzroy draws, the Stallions lose and Oakleigh wins, the Cannons could win the minor premiership and move to the premier league, together with the Stallions, while Fitzroy would miss out on goal difference. Should Fitzroy and Oakleigh lose and Westvale beats the Stallions, Westvale would snatch promotion on goal differerence.

• Matches to watch are Fitzroy City vs Sunshine Georgies, Frankston Pines vs Oakleigh Cannons, Whittlesea vs Westvale beats the Stallions, Westvale.

Women join the elites

Women`s soccer has been included as a tier two program at the Victorian Institute of Sport.

Previously, players in the Women's National Training Centre program that was established by the Victorian Soccer Federation, only had access to VIS services on a fee paying basis. However, this announcement provides financial support for the National Training Centre program for our elite female players.

The VIS boy's soccer program will continue with a tier one program status. The significant increases in female participation in soccer in Victoria will continue to provide a growing base of players in the sport. The implementation of the National Training Centre program and the inclusion of women's soccer within the VIS structure should contribute significantly to the development of our elite female players.

It is hoped that the inevitable outcome of this additional support, will be selection of Victorian female players in the Matildas squad in future years.

The VIS Boy`s Scholarship Holders are: Fred Au, Brendan Beni, Billy Celeski, Vito Ceniti, Ricky Chillico, Derrick Chisholm, Sammy De Vito, Aki Gonullu, Chris Greechan, Ahmet Ikiz, Manny Karas, Evan Karavitis, Serkan Oksuz, Goran Petrovic, Michael Popovski, Carl Recchia, Kristian Sarkies, Michael Sham Yuen, Cameron Watson, Furkan Yildirim, Bobby Gorcevski, Christian Morales.

The Women's National Training Centre Scholarship Holders are: Billie Anstis, Melissa Barbieri, Louisa Bisby, Daniela Digiammarco, Alexandra Doyle, Sarah Groenwald, Jessica Humble, Diane Jansen, Natalie Kalow, Alina Kapusta, Beth Kennedy, Selin Kuralay, Melissa Lovie, Yvette Muscat, Belinda Pacella, Chiara Romano, Caroline Saville, Katrina

Wheels win award

Wheelchair Soccer won its first award last week. It was successful at the 2001 Sport and Recreation Industry Awards held at the Hilton on the Park.

Nominated as a finalist for the 'Community Participation Initiative Award', the sport was rewarded for all of the hard work displayed over the last 7 years with a framed certificate, presented by Steve Monaghetti.

Representatives from the VSF and Leisure Action attended the awards ceremony hosted by Sport and Recreation Victoria and the Victorian Minister for Sport and Recreation , the Honourable Justin Madden MLC.

The Community Participation Incentive Award recognises innovative initiatives that focus on increasing opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation by the wider community or a target group.

Both the VSF and Leisure Action feel a great sense of pride and achievement despite Wheelchair Soccer not taking out the prize. "To be short-listed to a final three out of 44 applicants is a tremendous result and considering the other two finalists (who were joint winners) had participation numbers in excess of 6000, we felt proud to be up there. This award is a sign of recognition to all of the people who have been involved with Wheelchair Soccer since its initial beginnings as a recreational activity through Leisure Action in the early 1990's," the VSF said on its website.

Wheelchair Soccer has achieved success by empowering players and their communities to take charge of their sport whilst working in partnership with the broader soccer community and club network.

Justin Madden: Victoria Sport Minister.

The 2001 season has just kicked off in both South-East and North-West leagues with particpation levels at an all time high. Currently we have 107 registered players across the two regions and working with the following 8 VSF clubs to develop their Wheelchair Soccer teams.

North-West League: Altona Magic, Fawkner Blues, Green Gully Cavaliers, Preston Lions. South-East League: Bentleigh Greens, Knox City, Nunawading City, Oakleigh Cannons.

• For further information please contact Chris Baba at the VSF on 9685-8700.

Crazy Johns' Results & Ladders

WOMENS PREMIER LEAGUE: Brunswick 0 Whittlesea Stallions 1, Manningham 1 Keilorn Park 7, Cranbourne 6 South Melbourne 0, Box Hill Inter 1 Ballarat City 0

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 1: Firsts: Rd 21: Spring. White Eagles 3 (Dragisic G, Breslin D, Styczen I) Fitzroy City 1 (Marinkovic R), Westvale 1 (Honore L) Western Suburbs 2 (Bacak B, Markovski S), Oakleigh Cannons 2 (Grella D, Tidd M) Westgate 2 (Stevanovic A, Maglovski D), Thomastown Zebras 2 (Gasparini J, Tartaglia V) Frankston Pines 4 (Lewis C (4)), Sunshine Georgies 0 Lalor United 0, Frankston Strikers 2 (Traynor C, Ventieri L) Whittlesea Stallions 4 (Stubbins P (2), Maljanek M, Erdogan E)

2001 PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 2 S/E: Firsts: Rd 21: Endeavour Hills 0 Berwick Kings 1 (Kecojevic Z), Beaumaris 1 (Walker A) Dandenong 1 (Maitland J), South Caulfield 2 (Amato A, Nickas Y) Braeside United 1 (Tsantiogianis T), South Yarra 4 (Kennedy J (3), O'Connor K) Monash University 2 (Giannias V, Costaras G), Noble Park 3 (Dimkin G (2), Gorsovski J) Dandenong Inter 3 (Chaperon P (3)), North Caulfield 0 Heatherton United 5 (Pekmezovic J, Buljubasic Z, Nuhanovic S (2), Skenderevic N)

2001 PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 3: Firsts: Rd 21: Rowville Eagles 5 (Maghiar N, Mardale J (2), Puscasu D (2)) West Preston 0, Old Camberwell Gramm 0 Collingwood City 5 (Alevizos D (4), Mahmoud J), Preston South 3 (Paunkoski T (2), Bonicelli M) Old Melburnians 4 (Gomez I (3), Komocki P), Carrum United 3 (Perri D, Cordoma M, Mancuso M) Thornbury United 2 (Formoso C, Wilson P), Meadow Park 0 Flemington Falcons 1 (Pizzo J), Berwick City 2 Ascot Vale 1

VSF SENIOR RESULTS SOCCER RESULTS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 1: Firsts: Rd 21: Spring. White Eagles Fitzroy City , Westvale 1 (Honore L) Western Suburbs 2 (Bacak B, Markovski S), Oakleigh Cannons 2 (Grella D, Tidd M) Westgate 2 (Stevanovic A, Maglovski D), Thomastown Zebras Frankston Pines , Sunshine Georgies Lalor United , Frankston Strikers 2 (Traynor C, Ventieri L) Whittlesea Stallions 4 (Stubbins P (2), Maljanek M, Erdogan E)

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 2 NW: Firsts: Rd 21: Moreland City 3 (Carson T, Marcen R, Andreadis N) Yarraville Glory 1 (Orfanos E), Richmond 4 (White D (2), Mcaleer G, Davie G) Geelong 0, Albion Rovers 2 (Hulusi S, Di Camillo A) North Coburg United 2 (Uyanik A (2)), Croxton Park 3 (Redzepovic A (2), Cehic V) Melbourne City 0, North Geelong War'Rs 6 (Pausak M (2), Stocki D (4)) Williamstown 1 (Culjak N), Diamond Valley Utd 1 (Hasler G) Northcote City 3 (Kinigopoulos H, Grigorakis D, Panaghis M)

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 2 SE: Firsts: Rd 21: South Springvale 1 (Charalambous A) Kingston City 6 (Nezos D, Tsiaplias G, Achilleos G, Strapelias A (2), Papadopoulos T), Morwell Pegasus 1 (Mcauley M) Springvale City 0, Knox City 1 (Greenwood A) Croydon City Arrows 0, Stonnington City 0 Langwarrin 0, Doncaster Rovers 2 (Hackett S, Mazzarella A) East Richmond 0, Cranbourne Comets 2 (Rosa A, Ivanov J) Old Scotch Waverley 2 (Spence R)

2001 PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 1 S/E: Firsts: Rd 21: Clayton 4 (Tartaglia M, Juricskay M, Frezzini G, Aydogan S) Dingley City 2 (Akdogan F, Kumova B), Waverley Wanderers 0 Ashburton 0, Mooroolbark 5 (Milne C (3), Clausen R (2)) Brandon Park 0, Mitcham United 0 Noble Park United 1 (Varagic V), Doveton 1 (Hodkinson D) Newborough/Yallourn 0, Templestowe Eagles 2 (Cerantola A, Iacuone P) Riversdale 1 (Hronis C), Brimbank City 3 Northern United 6, Avondale Heights 1 Mill Park 2, Western Eagles 3 Whittlesea United 0, La Trobe University 1 Uni. Of Melbourne 0, Keon Park 2 Watsonia Heights 2, New South Port Utd 3 Brimbank 2.

2001 PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 2 S/E: Firsts: Rd 21: Endeavour Hills 0 Berwick Kings 1 (Kecojevic Z), Beaumaris 1 (Walker A) Dandenong 1 (Maitland J), South Caulfield 2 (Amato A, Nickas Y) Braeside United 1 (Tsantiogianis T), South Yarra 4 (Kennedy J (3), O'Connor K) Monash University 2 (Giannias V, Costaras G), Noble Park 3 (Dimkin G (2), Gorsovski J) Dandenong Inter 3 (Chaperon P (3)), North Caulfield Heatherton United.

VSF RESERVE RESULTS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 1: Reserves: Rd 21: Spring. White Eagles 0 Fitzroy City 3, Westvale 0 Western Suburbs 1, Oakleigh Cannons 2 Westgate 4, Thomastown Zebras 2 Frankston Pines 1, Sunshine Georgies 2 Lalor United 1, Frankston Strikers 0 Whittlesea Stallions 2

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE LADDER
FIRSTS – Round 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Whittlesea Stallions	**21**	**14**	**1**	**6**	**43**	**23**	**43**
Fitzroy City	21	13	3	5	40	28	42
Oakleigh Cannons	21	12	5	4	60	22	41
Westvale	21	12	3	6	40	29	39
Western Suburbs	21	10	5	6	41	25	35
Frankston Pines	21	9	6	6	55	40	33
Spring. White Eagles	21	8	5	8	25	35	29
Westgate	21	7	7	7	32	25	28
Thomastown Zebras	21	7	5	9	30	37	26
Lalor United	21	4	9	8	24	38	21
Frankston Strikers	21	3	3	15	21	45	12
Sunshine Georgies	21	0	2	19	8	72	2

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 1:
RESERVES – Round 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Whittlesea Stallions	**21**	**14**	**4**	**3**	**45**	**14**	**46**
Westgate	21	14	3	4	55	32	45
Thomastown Zebras	21	13	5	3	47	18	44
Western Suburbs	21	11	6	4	43	20	39
Westvale	21	12	0	9	49	28	36
Fitzroy City	21	8	6	7	39	27	30
Frankston Pines	21	7	8	6	42	34	29
Frankston Strikers	21	6	2	13	20	56	20
Oakleigh Cannons	21	4	7	10	29	47	19
Sunshine Georgies	21	5	3	13	14	51	18
Spring. White Eagles	21	3	5	13	22	42	14
Lalor United	21	3	3	15	25	61	12

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION

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PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

A gamble from coach John Sime paid off handsomely when an injury riddled Brisbane Lions ended Ipswich Knight's grand final dreams with a convincing 2-nil win in the Queensland premier league sudden death final at Lions Stadium on Sunday night.

Sime, who had lost four key players with injury in recent weeks, punted on the fitness of striker Reece Tollenaere, who has been struggling with a hamstring injury.

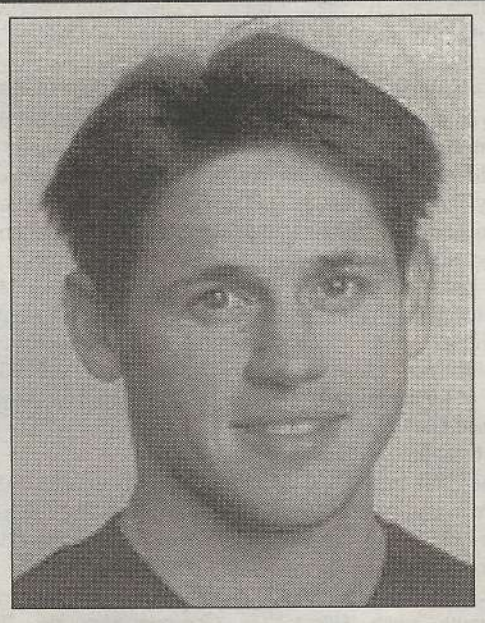
Tollenaere, a former Brisbane Strikers and Newcastle forward, has been an integral part of Lions' side all season and repaid Sime's gamble to play him by scoring both goals.

Tollenaere's first came in the 21st minute when he rose above the Knight's defence to head home a Coddy Lovell cross from the left.

The double came four minutes after the break when Ipswich defender Clint Scott brought down Mat Olly in the box for a penalty which Tollenaere hammered home.

However, Lions' injury worries for next week's knockout final against Gold Coast may have worsened with Olly taken off with a shoulder injury after Scott's infringement.

Sime, who took over the coaching reigns midseason from sacked predecessor John Ogden, was delighted with his side's dour win but realises the task ahead against the Gold Coast.



Peter Hinks: Couldn't save Ipswich Knights from a 2-0 loss to the Brisbane Lions.

"We've never beaten the Gold Coast this year and we know it won't be easy," Sime said.

"We drew with them at home and we'll be playing at home next weekend.

"They beat us 3-2 at their ground but that was a game which could have gone either way.

"I took a gamble today by playing a few players who shouldn't have including Reece who had been out with a hamstring strain and had only trained twice."

Sime conceded the semi-final was not a classic encounter, but rival coach Frank Pimblett had no doubt the better side won.

"We didn't win with style but I can't be too critical with the amount of injuries we've got," Sime said.

Pimblett was more to the point describing the Knights' performance as a fizzer.

"We lacked fire and went out with a whimper rather than a bang," Pimblett said.

"I can't explain why but we didn't rise to the occasion.

"We were beaten 4-0 in our previous match and normally we bounce back but we didn't this time and I can't understand why when we had so much to play for.

"We had a good season but it was a sad way to finish - a bit of a fizzer."

At Underwood Park, a Neil Ferguson hat trick gave the Gold Coast a thrilling 4-3 win over a courageous Rochedale Rovers in the other knockout semi-final on Saturday night.

The Gold Coast trailed 2-0 for most of the first half before Ferguson pounced with two quick goals to level the scores at 2-2 by halftime.

Gale force winds which sprung up only 30 minutes before kick-off made conditions difficult on the night, particularly for the home side who couldn't penetrate in the second half.

Rochedale took the early lead after 20 minutes after striker Cameron Hunt headed home a cross from Japanese midfielder Taro Urabe.

Coach Keiran Cooper could not have wished for a better start when five minutes later Urabe tucked home Rochedale's second.

"I thought things were going great but all of a sudden Ferguson banged in two quick goals in the ten minutes before halftime to make it 2-all," Cooper said.

"It was like The Alamo in the second half. The Gold Coast just destroyed us in the wind and we couldn't get out of our own half.

"There are no excuses. Gold Coast were the better side on the night and I'm not complaining."

Ferguson took only five minutes after the interval to notch his hat trick.

However, Rochedale bravely fought back to equalise at 3-3 to set up a thrilling finish when Todd Patch pounced on a fumble from Gold Coast keeper Jamie Irwin to score.

"The way the Gold Coast were playing I thought if we could have hung on to fulltime we could possibly get them in extra time or on penalties," Cooper said.

Cooper's wishes were never realised when Kris Dodd became a hero netting the winner with ten minutes remaining after a comedy of errors in the Rochedale defence.

Despite the defeat Cooper, in his first season of coaching, was content with the performance from his young side over the year.

"We weren't humiliated and we were never beaten by more than one goal all season," he said.

"It's the third time the Gold Coast beat us this season but they're the only team to do it and until this loss we hadn't been beaten in eight games."

Meanwhile semi-pro club The Gap will join North Star in next year's premier league after winning the promotion fight against premier league club Pine Rivers on Sunday.

In the two legged home-and-away series The Gap drew 0-0 with Pine Rivers in the first round last Wednesday and then came from behind to down the premier league club 4-2 at home in the second leg.

Matt Olley: Brisbane Lions striker who copped an injury.

North Star was automatically promoted to premier league after winning the semi-pro league while Bundaberg and now Pine Rivers were relegated.

ALL THE RESULTS ... ALL THE RESULTS

FINALS SERIES

Rochedale Rov	3	Gold Coast City	4
Brisbane Lions	2	Ipswich Knights	0

SEMI PRO LEAGUE

The Gap	3	Mitchelton	1
Slacks Creek	0	North Star	2
Redlands Utd	3	Acacia Ridge	2
North Pine	3	Capalaba	4
Souths Utd	3	Grange Thistle	1
Newmarket	0	Rocklea Utd	0
Olympic Utd		Albany Creek	

SEMI PRO SERIES

The Gap	2	Mitchelton	1
Slacks Creek	2	North Star	2
Redlands Utd	7	Acacia Ridge	1
North Pine	1	Capalaba	0
Souths Utd	3	Grange Thistle	0
Newmarket	4	Rocklea Utd	3
Olympic Utd	3	Albany Creek	0

SEMI PRO YOUTH

Rochedale Rov	3	Gold Coast City	4
Slacks Creek	3	North Star	2
Redlands Utd	1	Acacia Ridge	7
North Pine	0	Capalaba	3
Souths Utd	3	Grange Thistle	2
Newmarket	5	Rocklea Utd	2
Olympic Utd	2	Albany Creek	8

GLORY START PRE-SEASON ON RIGHT FOOT

By Richard Kreider

Perth Glory coach Mich d'Avray was satisfied with his team's uncomplicated 4-1 triumph over local State League club Swan IC at the Swan Italia Club last Saturday.

A healthy 1600 crowd had wrapped themselves around the undersized Midland pitch and would have been more than satisfied with the performance of the Perth National Soccer League club in their opening pre-season hit-out.

"We needed a good workout and got one," said d'Avray. "There was a lot of positives but I was especially pleased with the attitude of the players," he said.

With the dynamic combination of Damian Mori and Bobby Despotovski certain to wreak front-line havoc again, d'Avray must also be pleased with the depth of mid-field talent he now has at his disposal.

Namely, former Wollongong skipper Matt Horsley, former Marconi captain Brad Maloney, current Glory skipper Gareth Naven, Brazilian Edgar Junior, Gary Faria, PJ Roberts and young recruit Antonio Naglieri.

It was however, a Mori penalty after seven minutes that opened Glory's account when Michael Mirco handled on the goal line before Nick Mrdja doubled Perth's advantage in the 19th minute by drilling a searching Miller left-side centre into the roof of the net.

Glory's grip on the game would have been more convincing had it not been for the goalkeeping dexterity of Corey Hugo. The Swan custodian, who is in fact training with the Glory, must have further impressed the Perth officials in a match situation with his lightening reflexes and agility.

Swan midfielder Christian Marocchi, son of former Socceroo and Glory coach Gary Marocchi, brought the best out of Tony Franken in the 24th minute, by attacking the Perth goal direct from a 20-metre free kick.

The relegated state league side then caught the Glory flat-footed in the 40th minute when Gary Andrews set up Brian Robertson to head into an open net, after Franken lost his footing during his advance towards the Swan striker.

The game however, never looked anything else but a Glory victory and they restored their two-goal buffer in the 65th minute through Mrdja. Four minutes later, substitute Bobby Despotovski beat Hugo but not Michael Mirco who cleared his strike off the line and headed a 74th minute Shane Pryce centre onto the crossbar.

The talented net-buster eventually found the net by slipping the ball past the left hand of the advancing substitute ëkeeper Sam Collins in the first minute of stoppage time.

Defenders Jamie Harnwell and Shane Pryce, together with Mrdja up front were the pick of the Perth best, while Corey Hugo, John and Michael Mirco and Dean Mlinar grafted equally as hard for the home side.

SWAN IC: Corey Hugo (Sam Collins 83), Darren Freeman, Dean Mlinar, Damian Scali (James Coffey 81), Justin Everley (c), Michael Mirco (Jodie Henderson 73), Christian Marocchi, Brian Robertson, John Mirco (Tom Shepherd 69), Justin Hugo, Gary Andrews (Adrian McBride 80).

Perth Glory: Tony Franken, Todd Harnwell (Matt Horsley 46), Jamie Harnwell, Shane Pryce, Dion Valle (Craig Deans 46), Scott Miller (c) (PJ Roberts 46), Brad Maloney (Edgar Junior 46), Alistair Edwards, Damian Mori (Bobby Despotovski 46), Nick Mrdja, Antonio Naglieri.

Referee: Angelo Nardi

Crowd: 1600

Gareth Naven: Perth Glory captain.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRAND FINAL:

GRADE 13: Blacktown City 2 Northern Spirit 1.

GRADE 14: Sydney Olympic 2 Northern Spirit 3.

GRADE 15: Blacktown City 2 Northern Spirit 0.

GRADE 17: Blacktown City 0 Northern Spirit 2.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE GRAND FINAL:

GRADE 11: Blacktown City 1 Wollongong Wolves 0.

GRADE 12: Marconi Stallions 3 Northern Spirit 2 Extra time (2-2 Full time).

HAMILTON OLYMPIC MAKE IT 4 IN A ROW

By Tim Caimakamis

Hamilton Olympic won the Northern N.S.W. State League Grand Final on Sunday beating Highfields Azzurri 2-0 at Jack McLauchlan Oval.

Olympic have now won the last four grand finals in a row and have equalled the state record previously set by the Weston side of the early 70's.

Azzurri came into the Grand Final as underdogs having beaten the minor premiers Broadmedow Magic in the final the previous week. Against most expectations, as it was thought Magic would bounce back from the loss to Olympic (Olympic came from behind and overpowered them with pressure football in the major semi), Azzurri played their own personal grand final and knocked-out Magic. This would come to bear towards the end of the match against Olympic.

In good conditions in front of approximately 3000 spectators Olympic used there experience to secure their fourth title. A goal in each half by defender Mick Allen and midfielder Evis Heath was enough to end the dreams of the sentimental favourite Azzurri.

Azzurri were off to the worst start possible when in the 9th minute they gave away a free kick wide on the left & 35m out from goal. Taken by Craig Wallwork, he crossed high into the box were it was flicked on toward goal only to evade the diving goalkeeper, hit the post and bounce back across the face of goal for a grateful Allen to tap in. 1-0 to Olympic and their dominant start to the game gave many the impression that the result would be a foregone conclusion.

The game now stepped up a gear and to their credit it was Azzurri who forced the issue piling sustained pressure on the Olympic goal. The Federation Man-of-the-Match award winner, Olympic goalkeeper Liam Baker was called upon to produce a number of saves with shots on goal by Paul Wheeler (11'), Josh McGuire (13') and Grant Pace (17'). In the 20th minute, McGuire again found space to force a double save from Baker only for the third effort to be cleared of the line by Mick Allen. Baker parried a Paul Serrant effort in the 25th. The Olympic defence of Allen and captain Matt Austin together with sweeper Aaron Thompson did remarkably well to keep Azzurri at bay with many timed tackles and interceptions in a 15-minute onslaught that virtually decided the outcome of the game as Azzurri's effort dissipated as the game went on.

For the rest of the half it was basically all Olympic with Azzuri Keeper Fernando D'Accione called upon to produce in the 26th min with a save from a shot from Olympic Attacking midfielder Trent Austin. A minute later, Heath let fly with a 25m effort that went just high and wide. In the 31st min, a thru ball for Olympic Striker McAteer into the box was saved by D'Accione's legs. In the 37th min, a freekick from 30m was chipped in by left-footer Heath which forced D'Accione to advance and punch the ball away and as Azzurri cleared the ball and advance the steady Olympic defence won possession to enable a thru ball for Olympic Striker Corey Filipsevic who advanced then cut in from the left only for his shot to be saved by D'Accione.

Olympic continued the pressure as their midfield having re-adjusted (due to Azzurri having done their homework and eliminated Olympic's dangerous attacking wide-play, nullifying as much as possible attacking the raids of Doug West and Craig Wallwork) was dominating the game. Evis Heath had a near post header saved well by D'Accione in the 40th and in the 45th; he curled in a free-kick from near the right corner flag that was just headed wide of the far post by Mick Allen. The big strong central defender was solid in defence with a number of timely tackles as well as contributing to the attack with a number of thru balls and having the authority of coach Greg Smith to go forward for set pieces to take advantage of his height. 1-0 to Olympic at half-time.

The second half was a tight struggle with both teams failing to be clinical and make the most of their chances. Azzurri's two best chances were from free-kicks, the first in the 50th min a cross from the left was easily caught by Olympic's Liam Baker, while in the 67th min a free from 20m in front of goal was kicked straight into the wall. Mentally tired if not physically Azzurri even though they were only 0-1 down were unable to raise themselves to the next level.

Olympic on the other hand were motoring along in third gear confident enough and with their experience not panicking to maintain their 1-0 lead. An injured Trent Austin (a lower back strain carried into the game) was replaced by club captain Ben Lane in the 60th minute, which provided some extra zest into the attack. Ten minutes later, a cross from the right provided for a scramble in the Azzurri box and with his second attempt and Olympics third, Evis Heath put away his 9th goal of the season to virtually clinch the grand final. From this point Azzurri were unable to put any serious pressure on Olympics goal, as they were unable to maintain enough possession as now Olympic controlled everything.

The last 20 minutes was an anti-climax with Olympic having a couple of good chances but unable to go further in front, instead with their solid defence and their dominating midfield forcing the young Highfields outfit into frustration, the 2-0 scoreline enough to send their faithful supporters into raptures. For Azzurri, their better players on the day were Josh McGuire and goalkeeper Fred D'Accione who kept the scoreline respectable. For Olympic, Liam Baker was outstanding for 15 minutes in the first half, Heath was elusive and commanding in the middle of the park with support from Trent Austin. In defence, captain and new father Matt Austin (1st baby born on Friday) celebrated Father's day with a top performance. His defensive partner Mick Allen I thought produced a man-of-the-match performance as he exceeded all expectations.

Olympic coach (and former Breakers Youth coach) also recording 4 Grand Final wins in a row, Greg Smith was expectedly happy with the win. "Most people wanted Azzurri to win, so the pressure was on us to succeedî, said Smith. "It was the hardest Grand Final of the four to winî said a relived Smith. Hopefully we will secure the services of most of our players for next season as only a couple are out of contract, and set ourselves a goal of winning a record 5th Grand Final Victory was Smith's parting sentiments as he left for the Hamilton RSL club to join the rest of the club and supporters for the celebrations.

In the minor grades, Broadmedow Magic beat Olympic 3-1 in u/18's while Edgeworth Eagles overcame Olympic 5-4 on penalties are ending the match 1-all.

Bossley Park High Win Again

Led by coach Justine Davies, Bossley Park Public School last week beat Western Sydney Area Champions, Banks Public School 2-0.

Bossley, who are Sydney South West Area champions, controlled the game, which was decided at Marconi Park, Bossley Park, from start to finish.

West last week's victory, Bossley PS will now tackle Eglinton Public School.

Winter Super League

VALENTINE SPORTS PARK
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FINALS SERIES

DOLPHINS MAKE FINAL AFTER GOLDEN GOAL

Gary Van Egmond: Manly Warringah's coach, guided his chargers to the Winter Super League grand final after a 2-1 victory over the Fairfield Bulls.

Fairfield Bulls	**1**
Manly Warringah Dolphins	**2**

Lightning struck twice for the luckless Fairfield Bulls, as they lost out to a 93rd minute golden goal winner for the second week running and therefore bringing their season to a premature end.

There was not much separating the two sides come the dramatic final whistle, Mark Beldham scoring with an absolutely amazing winner.

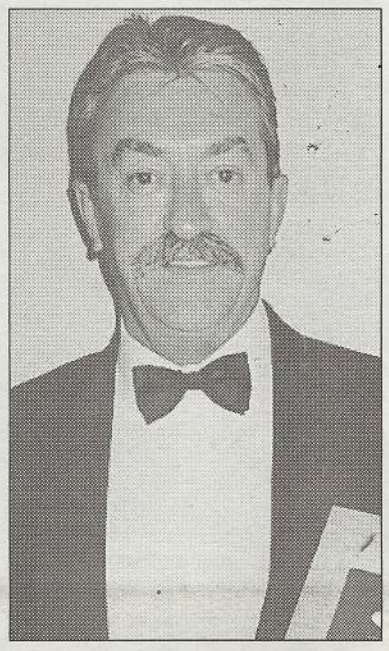
With perhaps the mishit of the season, Beldham helped his side record their first victory over the Bulls in four attempts this campaign, scuffing a ten yard shot which no one seemed willing to stop.

Steve Berry: Manly Warringah Dolphins reliable striker should feature in next week's grand final.

Much like life flashing before ones eyes, so to did the Bulls' fantastic season as the winner seemed to happen in slow motion.

Jonathon Mitten's swivel volley in the 9th minute was cancelled out by Mathew Borg's majestic leaping header in the 55th minute.

Manly Warringah the winners by the odd goal in three and in the process setting up a date with the 2001 NSWSF Super League Premiers, Bankstown City Lions, in the Grand Final.



John Turner: Fairfield Bull's master tactician bowed out over the weekend.

SCOREBOARD

PRELIMINARY FINAL:

Fairfield Bulls *(M Borg 55m)*	**1**
Manly Warringah Dolphins *(J Mitten 9m M Beldham 93m)* *Extra Time (1-1 F/T).*	**2**

GRADE 21:

Fairfield Bulls	**1**
Manly Warringah Dolphins Extra Time (1-1 F/T).	**2**

GRADE 18:

Macarthur Rams	**2**
Bankstown City Lions	**1**

Winter Super League

www.soccernsw.com.au

Grand Final

Sunday 9th of September - 3.00pm
Melita Park, South Granville.

Bankstown City Lions
v
Manly Warringah Dolphins

Under-21:
Macarthur Rams v Manly Warringah Dolphins, 12.15pm

Under-18:
Manly Warringah Dolphins v Macarthur Rams, 10.15am

Catch up with all the latest news on the Winter Super League and other NSW Soccer news on our website:

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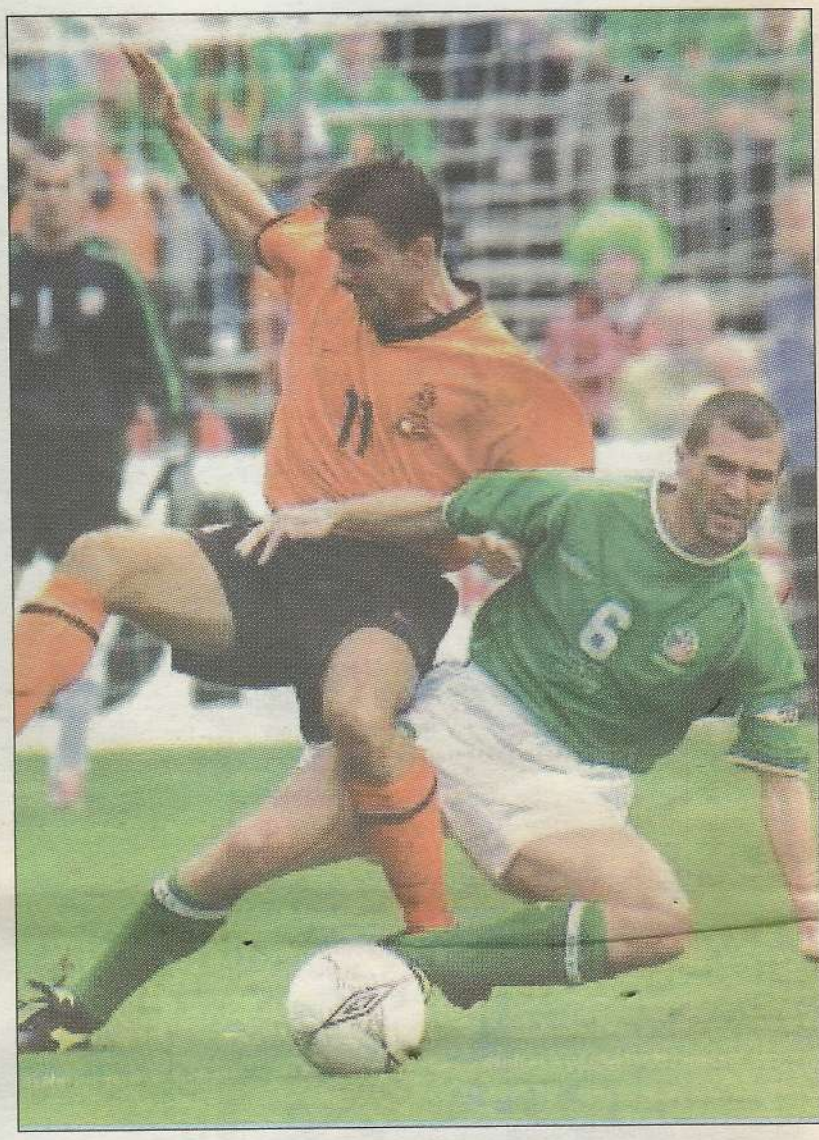
WORLD

Images of 2002 World Cup Qualifiers

A German police officer attending to an injured English Soccer fan during clashes ahead of Saturday's showdown between England and Germany.



Republic of Ireland captain, Roy Keane (right) contests the ball with Dutch winger, Marc Overmars in Dublin.

The scoreboard at the Olympic Stadium in Munich, tells the story of England's conquest of Germany.

Croatian defender, Robert Kovac (right) attempts to stop Scottish midfielder, Don Hutchinson.

England midfielder, David Beckham shoots at a wall of German defenders last Saturday, in their 5-1 win.

Liverpool-Dortmund showdown soldout

Borussia Dortmund have sold all 52,000 tickets for their September 19 Champions League tie against English giants Liverpool, the German club said last week.

The last 10,000 tickets were snapped up within a couple of hours of going on open sale here with Dortmund, who won the trophy in 1997, also expecting 3,500 Liverpool supporters to make the trip.

Liverpool won the UEFA Cup at Dortmund's Westfalenstadion last season with a famous 5-4 victory over Spanish outfit Alaves and Liverpool will hope for a winning return to the German league leaders ground.

This season the four-time winners of the old European Cup make their return to Europe's premier competition for the first time since the 1985 Heysel disaster in Belgium where 39 Juventus fans were killed before the European Cup final after crowd disturbances.

Slobodan Santrac: Lost his job

Saudi coach, Santrac sacked

Saudi Arabia have sacked Yugoslav coach Slobodan Santrac following their 2-0 defeat by Iran in a World Cup qualifier.

The Saudi Football Association said in a statement that assistant coach Nasser al-Jawhar was to take over duties for the rest of the tournament.

The decision to relieve Santrac of his duties was made because of "disappointing results" against Iran and Bahrain.

Iran and Saudi are the two big names seeking automatic qualification for the 2002 tournament in South Korea and Japan.

Santrac signed a two-year contract in February after Czech Milan Macala was sacked following the team's 4-1 defeat by Japan in the first game of the Asian Cup in Lebanon in October.

Santrac had previously worked in China, leading unfancied Shandong Luneng to their first league title in 1999, but left the club at the end of last season.

He was Saudi Arabia's fifth coach since 1998.

TOUGH DAYS FOR ZIDANE AT MADRID — STOICHKOV

Bulgarian football legend Hristo Stoichkov believes Zinedine Zidane's arrival at Real Madrid will cause a dressing room split and leave the Frenchman as marginalised as Nicolas Anelka was during his stint in Madrid.

The former Barcelona striker's comments came as the fiery Bulgarian was visiting his old team-mates at the Catalan side.

"Zidane will end up like Anelka," he told Antena 3 TV station.

"The fact that he's a world champion, European champion and the best player in the world will cause jealousy among the other players," he added.

Zidane joined Real Madrid in a world record 65-million-dollar transfer from Juventus in the close season just a year after Madrid off-loaded Nicolas Anelka to Paris Saint Germain after he had spent an unhappy spell there.

Chilean President Ricardo Lagos (right) talks with Marcel Desailly, captain of the French national team, in Santiago, Chile. French coach Roger Lemerre is at left. The French world champions were in Santiago for a friendly match against Chile last week.

EFFENBERG OUT FOR 5 WEEKS

Bayern Munich's inspirational captain Stefan Effenberg will be out of action for at least five weeks after having his right leg put in plaster last week.

Bayern's team doctor Hans-Wilhelm Muller-Wohlfahrt said 33-year-old Effenberg had complained of pains from the instep. His foot will remain in plaster for two weeks after which he would be examined again.

Muller-Wohlfahrt said Effenberg would be unable to play for five weeks and would therefore miss the European champion's clash with league leaders Borussia Dortmund on September 8 and also the Champions League group matches against Dutch club Feyenoord on September 12, Sparta Prague on September 18 and the game against Spartak Moscow a week later.

Midfielder Effenberg had missed Bayern's 3-2 defeat to Liverpool in the European Super Cup in Monaco penultimate Friday.

Stefan Effenberg: Sidelined by injury.

Banned Davids returns in October

Juventus midfielder Edgar Davids and Parma defender Stefano Torrisi have been banned for five months after testing positive for the banned steroid nandrolone.

Reports in the Italian media said the disciplinary committee of Italy's Football League had also fined Davids 100 million lire ($46,650) while Torrisi was fined 50 million lire.

Considering he started his suspension on May 17th, Juventus's Dutch midfielder could return playing after October 17th: that's to say he'll be surely at Lippi's disposal for the match against Bologna fized on October 21st.

Davids has been suspended since May when authorities confirmed he had tested positive for nandrolone after Juve's match against Udinese on March 4.

The Italian Olympic Committee's anti-doping commission had requested an eight-month ban for Davids. But the shorter five months means he will be back in action on October 17 as bans are backdated to begin at the time of the player's suspension.

That is likely to spark controversy with other clubs whose players have been banned for doping, especially Lazio, whose Portuguese defender Fernando Couto was given a 10-month ban in July and will not take the field again until early 2002.

Davids and former Torino and Atletico Madrid defender Torrisi were the latest in a string of doping cases which marred the last Italian soccer season.

League's proxy asked a disqualification of 8 months and a 200 millions's fine: Davids has been suspended in May, but he always claimed his innocence giving responsibility to few food integrators.

The commission decided to reduce the disqualification from 8 to 5 months and for a 100 millions Italian lire's fine.

MARADONA WARNED TO STAY AWAY FROM LOVE CHILD

The mother of Diego Armando Maradona junior last week, warned her child's father, the Argentinian football legend of the same name, to stay away, ANSA news agency reported.

Cristiana Sinagra, who conceived the child — now 14 and who was recently called up to the Italian under-17 football squad — during a brief romance with the Argentinian and raised the boy herself, said that her son had managed so far without his father and therefore did not need him now.

"At the moment (regarding Maradona senior) there is no thought either from me or my son," she said of the footballer whose paternity of her child was only recognised in 1993.

"He (the boy) is happy, the coach gave him this opportunity and he is seizing it. Nothing has changed because until now he has lived life without his father."

Asked if her son's recent exploits might be the prelude to a meeting between father and son she said: "If this happens only because a son accomplishes something it would be a very sad thing, I hope it never happens.

"Feeling comes before glory and money."

Sinagra, despite her candid remarks to the media, also criticised the media interest in her son since he received his call-up last week.

"There are no limits to the pressure of the media, there is no respect for a 15-year-old (Diego turns 15 next month) and this is very serious. Myself and his club will try and protect him from all that."

Diego Maradona

Diego — nicknamed Dieguito (little Diego) by some in the press — also featured widely in Italian papers with pictures of him taking part in a practice match with the Italy senior national team last week.

Players want Serie A imports reduced

A NUMBER of high-profile Italian internationals have reportedly called for a restriction on the number of foreigners in Serie A.

Just before Italy faced Lithuania in a World Cup qualifier last weekend, several of the Italian stars reportedly grouped together and sent a letter to Italian president Silvio Berlusconi, appealing for the number of foreign imports to be limited.

The selected group of players, whose identity remains unknown,warned of the "invasion of Italian football" and voiced fears about the future of the national team.

Former Bayern Munich coach and current Italian national manager, Giovanni Trapattoni offered his approval for a restriction on foreign players.

"Globalisation is very well, but you have to impose restrictions just like other employers in Europe do. Otherwise this will be the end of the national team," added Trapattoni.

The influx of foreigners has been a subject of debate in many leagues throughout Europe but this show of support by the 'creme de la creme' of Serie A is likely to rekindle the debate.

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

Under Hector Cuper, the Argentinian coach bought from Valencia, Inter made a smashing start to the new Serie A season, a 4-1 win over Perugia.

Inter every year try to buy a League title (Scudetto) - little wonder when one considers that their last one was in 1989 under the guidance of Giovanni Trapattoni. So far they have failed miserably.

This year they have done their usual and bought big. So for the long-suffering Inter fans, will this finally be their year?

In goals they have Italian international, Francesco Toldo, bought from Fiorentina who replaces Frenchman, Sebastian Frey, who has gone to Parma.

In defence they have bought Materazzi and Lombardi from Perugia, Vivas from Arsenal, Fissore from Lecce, Fresi from Napoli, Meneses from Nacional, Rivas from Salamanca and Georgatos from Olympiakos.

They had already on their books Cordoba and Gresko. It will be hard to select the regular three or four that start each week.

In midfield they had Dalmat and they bought Christian Zanetti and Frau from Roma, Conceicao from Parma, Emre and Okan from Galatasaray, Peralta from Torino, Pirlo from Brescia, Robbiati from Perugia, Caneira from Reggina, Brncic from Vicenza and Guly from AC Milan. Once again it will be a selection headache.

Up front they have of course Christian Vieri and Ronaldo who, if fit, will be the best combination money can buy. They also have on their books the Turk Hakan Sukor. They have bought Nicola Ventola, who represented Italy at the Olympics, from Atalanta and Mohammed Kallon from Vicenza. Both of these are excellent buys.

In short, Inter have an abundance of talent in every department but the hard task will be making it all gel together. There are many nationalities and many big stars and some of them will object to sitting on the bench. Cuper's most difficult task will be to make it all blend together successfully.

●●●●

Brescia held AC Milan to a 2-2 draw after leading by 2-0 at half time. After the poor start by the glamour club to the season, the papers were rife with rumours already about who exactly was picking the team.

Coach Fatih Terim, has already been 'earmarked' as the first Serie A coach to be sacked. Supposedly Terim was letting his two senior players, Paolo Maldini and Alessandro Coastacurta, select the team.

Is it believable? Madini and Terim absolutely denied it. However, former club player and former Parma and Juventus coach, Carlo Ancelotti, remains unemployed this year. Should Terim be sacked, Ancelotti would provide a logical alternative. This scenario has already been mentioned several times.

●●●●

A boy who shortly turns 15 is making headlines in Italy. His name is Diego Armando Maradona and he is the son of the legend.

Born in 1986 when Maradona senior was playing for Napoli, he 'officially' became his son in 1993 when a court ruled based on DNA tests that he was.

Maradona never recognised his son - in fact the boy has never met his father - but after a lengthy legal battle his mum was finally vindicated.

Maradona junior plays in Napoli's youth team and was called into the Italian Under 17 team last week. The junior team played the senior Italian team and lost 9-0.

The game was a practice match for the big boys as they prepared for last weekend's World Cup qualifier against Lithuania.

However, all the focus was on Maradona junior and even coach Trapattoni couldn't get away from fielding a barrage of questions on how he saw the youngster.

The kid played well but all the added pressure will come because of his name. Being the son of the greatest player of all time certainly carries some burden.

He will not be allowed to develop like every other child and the attention will continue as his soccer career progresses. Sadly, he will be compared to his great father and no matter what, he will be subjected to close media scrutiny. At only 14 one hopes that he doesn't 'burn out' before his time.

Italy ... Italy ...

Gianlugi Zambrotta (left) contests with a Lithuanian opponent, over the weekend.

Italians' hurrah put on hold

Lithuania held Italy to a 0-0 draw here Saturday in a World Cup European Zone group eight qualifier, preventing the three-times champions from qualifying for next year's finals with a match to be spare.

Lithuania fully deserved their point while Italy must now win their last match at home to Hungary to be certain of qualifying although the odds are still stacked heavily in their favour despite this below-par display.

Many had expected this to be a triumphal march to Japan and South Korea for the Italians but they were sluggish throughout against the same team they trounced 4-0 in Trieste earlier in the tournament.

The tone was set early on when the first real opportunity fell to Lithuania in the second minute.

Goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon flapped at a freekick and Edgaras Jankauskas had what looked a simple chance but froze allowing the Italian defence to crowd him out with Buffon stranded.

It was a dire first half by any standards but in the second period it was Lithuania who showed first again with a deflected Rankauskas shot almost catching out Buffon.

Off-target shots from Inter Milan forward Christian Vieri and Gianluca Zambrotta of Juventus were the best Italy could manage at the start of the second half but just on the hour mark the three-times World Cup winners finally carved out a real chance.

A chipped pass from Alessio Tacchinardi found Totti but the AS Roma skipper drilled his shot straight at Stauce's feet.

Trapattoni decided to shake things up and brought on Filippo Inzaghi of AC Milan in place of Del Piero.

The frustration was beginning to show and defender Fabio Cannavaro was booked for a needless foul and minutes later Jankauskas went desperately close to giving the home side when he sidestepped two tackles but fired just wide of Buffon's post.

Tacchinardi was also booked as he halted another promising Baltic raid and Vieri had a goal disallowed for climbing as he headed past Stauce.

Time was running out and Trapattoni brought on Barcelona's new signing Francesco Coco for Zambrotta and Stefano Fiore for Totti but neither could produce the moment of inspiration and Lithuania fully deserved a point.

Arab monarch to buy Fiorentina

Dubai Emir Maktoum Al Maktoum has launched a bid to buy ailing Italian first division club Fiorentina, Gazzetta dello Sport reported last week.

The Emir, a major player in horseracing circles and whose brother Sheikh Mohammed is the brainchild behind the Godolphin racing Operation, is keen to expand his sporting empire to include the Florence-based club who are still fighting against bankruptcy.

"Emir Maktoum Al Maktoum has given me the order to acquire Fiorentina," said Al Maktoum's associate Shahran Tootoonchi, who is from Florence.

"Like the other members of our group he has officially agreed to our initiative."

Tootoonchi added that papers had already been handed over to a lawyer and that a formal bid will be made before September 15 when Fiorentina appear before a bankruptcy court.

He added that, in the event of a successful bid, that the new club president would be from Florence and that coach Roberto Mancini could keep his job.

"We have clear ideas on management - we have managerial initiatives, we will fulfil marketing potential. Our model is Manchester United... we have been working on this project for two months and we want to bring it to fruition," said Tootoonchi.

Ironically one of the team from The Emir's greatest rivals in horseracing John Magnier bought into United earlier this summer with renowned punter JP McManus.

Fiorentina have been sold several top players since they were first threatened with bankruptcy earlier this year.

The club has been put into administration and its owner film and media mogul Vittorio Cecchi Gori's business empire is the subject of an ongoing police investigation.

PARMA VEERS INTO NICARAGUA

Italian first division outfit Parma are setting up a partnership with fledgling Nicaraguan outfit Parmalat Futbol Club Nicaragua, the Serie A side's general manager Salvatore Scaglia announced on the club website.

The Nicaraguan club was only established in 2000 but won the under-21 second division title and on Sunday kicks off its first first division campaign against Club Walter Ferretti.

"This will permit us to contact the best youngsters in Nicaragua," said Scaglia, adding that he was already aware of the talents of goalkeeper Danny Tellez and defender David Solorzano.

ENGLAND ... ENGLAND

Owen, Beckham still cannot believe German slaughter

England striker Michael Owen lived out his schoolboy fantasy with a stunning hat-trick in England's 5-1 victory over Germany in the World Cup qualifier in Munich on Saturday night.

Owen's treble and goals from Liverpool team-mates Steven Gerrard and Emile Heskey demolished the Germans in their own backyard to boost England's chances of automatic qualification for the 2002 Finals.

He said: "You can dream about scoring a hat-trick but you don't think it is going to come true.

"It was unbelievable to come here. No-one would have predicted this scoreline but some of us might have predicted the victory."

He added on BBC television: "We are a good team. It's not about me. It is good on a personal note to score a hat-trick but had David Seaman not made a world class save at 1-1 it might have been a different story.

"Gerrard got a great goal, too. Everyone will get 10 out of 10 in the papers for this performance."

Captain David Beckham, who had been a doubt for the match all week because of a groin injury, paid tribute to the team's character for coming back after Carsten Jancker had opened the scoring for Germany.

"We knew it was going to be hard to start off which it proved to be when we went 1-0 down," said the Manchester United midfielder.

"It shows the character of the team. We knew we would have to work hard and we did that.

"Michael started us rolling and Steve scored with a great strike.

"We knew in the second half we could not come out and start like we did in the first half, and we went on from there."

As the goals flew in, the skipper admitted he "couldn't really believe they were going in like they were".

He added: "It was about the whole team tonight. I was lucky enough to be out there with those players."

England coach Sven Goran Eriksson said: "It was a very good evening. I always said and always believed we could beat Germany but I could not believe 5-1. It was too much the difference between the teams was maybe not so big.

"We played very well, we played some beautiful balls and showed we have a very good spirit when we went one down.

"We did not play well for the first five or 10 minutes but after that we got better and better."

But Eriksson sounded a note of caution ahead of the qualifier against Albania at St James' Park on Wednesday.

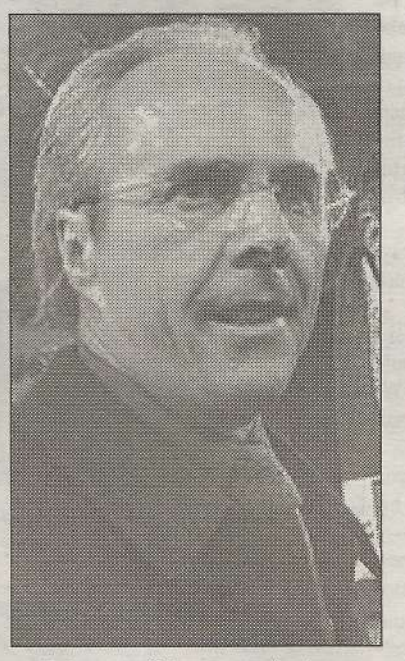
"We have a difficult and dangerous game on Wednesday. This was a great result but after such a victory it would be crazy to lose things."

Germany coach Rudi Voeller was unable to attend the post-match press conference after it emerged that his father had suffered a heart attack as he watched the game at the Olympic Stadium.

Deputy coach Michael Skibbe attended instead of Voeller and said: "It was very sad what happened to Rudi's father."

Erikkson also expressed his sympathy, saying: "Some things are more important than football."

Voeller's father, Kurt, was said to be in a stable condition.



Eriksson: "You can only dream about results like this."

England striker and hat-trick hero, Michael Owen (right) takes on Germany's defender, Jorg Boehme on Saturday night in Munich.

How They Performed

DAVID SEAMAN - 8/10
Not really to blame for Jancker's goal and did well to keep out Boehme's shot. A lot steadier than Oliver Kahn and did not let England down.

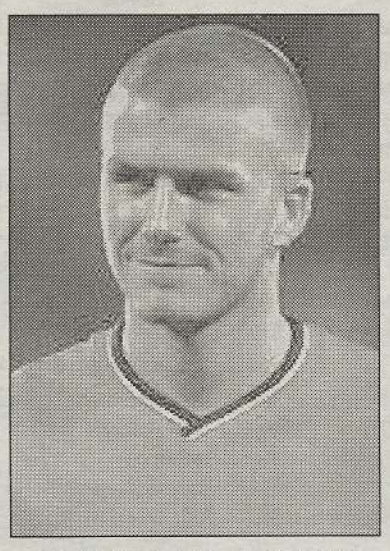
GARY NEVILLE - 8/10
Got forward plenty of times to put pressure on the Germans. Defensively sound, barely putting a foot wrong.

ASHLEY COLE - 8/10
Another impressive performance on the world stage. Defended solidly when required and was always keen to push forward.

RIO FERDINAND - 8/10
Partly at fault for the opening goal but recovered from a hesitant start. His partnership with Campbell improved as the game progressed.

SOL CAMPBELL- 8/10
Poor marking alongside Ferdinand enabled Jancker to open the scoring but he too settled down. Shackled the Germans in the second half as England went on the rampage.

DAVID BECKHAM - 9/10
Brilliant captain's display. Helped create the first three goals. Showed no fitness problems and bossed England's midfield, proving that he is truly a world-class player.



Beckham: "We knew we had to work hard.

STEVEN GERRARD - 8/10
Hooked the ball back to help set-up Owen's equaliser and then scored his first England goal from 25 yards. Given a breather late on after all the hard work was done.

PAUL SCHOLES - 7/10
Not the most noticeable ofdisplays from the ManchesterUnited midfielder but played an important part in helping England to victory.

NICK BARMBY - 7/10
Headed the ball on to set up Owen's vital equaliser and played a lively part on the left but faded slightly in the second half.

EMILE HESKEY - 8/10
Always busy, helped create England's third goal by heading down Beckham's cross. Picked up a careless booking
before scoring England's fifth.

MICHAEL OWEN - 10/10
The Liverpool lad is fast becoming an England scoring legend. Reacted quickly to score the equaliser and then fired England 3-1 ahead before completing a hat-trick. Faultless.

SUBSTITUTES:
*Steve McManaman (65 mins) Replaced Barmby on the left.
*Owen Hargreaves. (77 mins) Took over from Gerrard late in the game.
*Jamie Carragher (83 mins) Played the final seven minutes after Scholes was withdrawn.

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until September 22)

FIFA founded 1904

1	France	812	69	Iraq	518	137	Burundi	305
2	Brazil	808	70	Liberia	514	138	Yemen	295
3	Argentina	783	71	Congo DR	512	139	Korea DPR	294
4	Italy	733	72	Georgia	510	140	Rwanda	285
5	Germany	725	73=	Algeria	507	141	Myanmar	276
6	Colombia	723	73=	Cyprus	507	142	Surinam	268
7	Czech Rep.	716	75	Burkina Faso	506	142	Tajikistan	268
7	Spain	716	76	Kuwait	505	144	Luxemburg	260
9	Portugal	714	77	Cuba	504	145	Andorra	256
10	Netherlands	705	78	Bosnia-Herz	502	146	Ethiopia	255
11	Paraguay	703	79	Bolivia	501	147=	Bangladesh	253
12	Mexico	702	80	Estonia	492	147=	Palestine	253
13	Yugoslavia	691	81=	Canada	489	149	Maldives	248
14	Romania	687	81=	Macedonia FYR	489	150	Sri Lanka	246
15	England	675	83	Haiti	481	151	Liechtenstein	244
16	United States	670	84	New Zealand	477	152=	Antigua and Bar	232
17	Croatia	666	85	El Salvador	475	152=	Tanzania	232
18	Denmark	663	86	Albania	474	154	Botswana	230
19	Sweden	661	86=	Belarus	474	155	Benin	220
20	Russia	652	86=	Qatar	474	155	Nepal	220
21	Norway	648	89	Indonesia	471	157	Gambia	215
22	Tunisia	646	90	Gabon	468	158	Dominica	214
23	Honduras	643	91	Oman	461	159	San Marino	213
24	Uruguay	642	92	Congo	458	160	Cayman Islands	207
25	Ireland Republic	638	93	Syria	454	161=	Bermuda	206
25	Poland	638	94=	Latvia	450	161=	Dominican Rep.	206
27	Japan	634	94=	Lithuania	450	163	Cape Verde Is.	204
28	South Africa	629	96	Armenia	449	164	British Virgin Is.	202
29	Morocco	624	97	Namibia	447	165	Kyrgyzstan	197
30	Belgium	622	98	Guinea	444	166	Laos	194
31	Costa Rica	621	99	Lebanon	443	167	Belize	187
32	Trinidad & Tobago	619	100	Jordan	440	168	Eritrea	184
33	Turkey	612	101	Vietnam SR	437	169	Vanuatu	182
34	Nigeria	610	102	Kenya	423	170	Chinese Taipei	181
35=	Chile	609	103	Moldova	422	171	Cambodia	179
35=	Saudi Arabia	609	104	Kazakhstan	421	172	Mauritania	167
37	Cameroon	608	105	Wales	415	173	Chad	162
38=	Egypt	602	106	Barbados	413	174	Samoa	158
38=	Scotland	602	107	Northern Ireland	411	175	Tonga	151
40	Slovakia	601	108	Singapore	407	176	Cook Islands	150
41=	Israel	596	109	Malaysia	405	177	Philippines	143
41=	Korea Republic	596	110	Venezuela	400	178	Guyana	142
41=	Peru	596	111	Panama	392	179	Netherlands Ant.	121
44	Slovenia	595	112	Mali	391	180	Central Afri.Rep.	119
45	Cote d' Ivoire	589	113	Uganda	387	181	Macao	114
46	Iran	585	114	Azerbaijan	384	182	Guinea-Bissau	111
47=	Ecuador	583	115=	Libya	380	183	Bahamas	110
47=	Ukraine	583	115=	Turkmenistan	380	184	Sao Tome e Principe	108
49=	Austria	581	117	Bahrain	379	185	Pakistan	106
49=	Bulgaria	581	118	India	368	186	Aruba	101
51	**AUSTRALIA**	578	119	Malawi	367	187	Mongolia	94
52	Jamaica	576	120	Madagascar	366	188	Niger	91
53	Angola	558	121	Sudan	365	189	Nicaragua	89
54	Hungary	557	122	Faroe Islands	364	190	Brunei Darussalam	86
55=	Finland	552	123	Mozambique	350	191	Equatorial Guinea	85
55=	Greece	552	124	Fiji	349	192	Seychelles	77
55=	Iceland	552	125	Mauritius	341	193	Djibouti	75
58	Zambia	551	126	Tahiti	336	194	Anguilla	65
59	Ghana	550	127	Lesotho	331	195	PNG	59
60	Switzerland	549	128	St Vincent/Gr	330	196	Puerto Rico	55
61	Guatemala	546	129	St Kitts & Nevis	329	197	Somalia	54
62	Thailand	543	130	St Lucia	327	198	US Virgin Islands	48
63	China PR	529	131	Swaziland	323	199	Guam	27
63	UAE	529	132	Grenada	311	200	Turks & Caicos Is	21
65	Zimbabwe	526	133	Malta	310	201	American Samoa	16
66	Senegal	525	134=	Hong Kong	309	202	Bhutan	14
67	Uzbekistan	523	134=	Sierra Leone	309	203	Montserrat	10
68	Togo	522	134=	Solomon Islands	309			

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

Ivan Zamorani, celebrating Chile's surprise 2-1 win over world champions, France.

Zamorano upstage World Champs, France

France suffered a hiccup in their preparations to defend their world title next year after losing 2-1 to Chile on Saturday in a memorable send-off for Ivan Zamorano.

Excused from the grind of qualifying for the finals as holder, Roger Lemerre's team had expected to dominate a Chile side who are out of contention for the finals themselves.

But the Chileans opened the score after four minutes with a superb Pablo Galdames goal after Zamorano had created the chance.

Despite the efforts of a team including the world's most expensive player, Real Madrid's Zinedine Zidane, France went two down after the break.

Reinaldo Navia fired home after picking up a clearance from France's Manchester United defender Michel Silvestre.

David Trezeguet pulled a goal back in the 74th minute but the match belonged to Zamorano, who is retiring from international football after making 69 appearances and scoring 34 goals for the national team.

"This has been an amazing experience for me," said Zamorano. "You have to experience these moments to understand what they mean to me.

"I said before the match that the result wasn't important but I'll always remember that second-half which was so emotional for me."

I won't quit, Van Gaal vows

Holland coach Louis van Gaal insisted he had no plans to quit in the wake of the 1-0 defeat against the Republic of Ireland which has left his team facing elimination from the 2002 World Cup.

Speaking at a press conference here after returning from Dublin, under-fire van Gaal said he intended to see out his contract with the Dutch Football Association (KNVB).

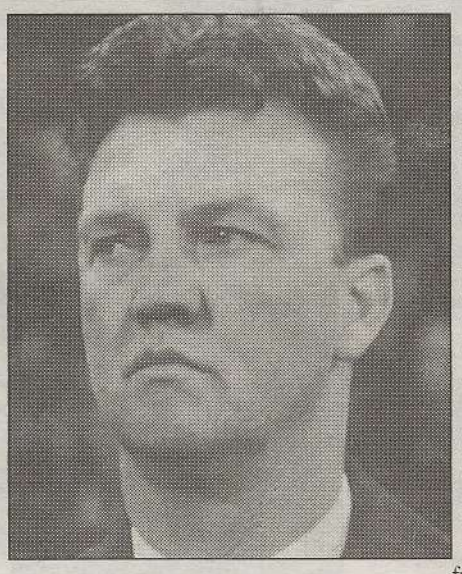
"I have every every intention of staying and respecting my contract which lasts until 2004," van Gaal said.

"When I took over in July last year I agreed with the KNVB that we would review my work every two years. We haven't reached that point yet," said van Gaal.

On Sunday the former Ajax and Barcelona coach acknowledged his team had failed.

"Believe me, I am my own toughest critic. I review myself every day," added van Gaal.

"I know that a trainer should be judged on his results. Yes, we have failed," he said.



Louis Van Gaal: Dutch coach.

The defeat at Lansdowne Road on Saturday left Holland needing a miraculous sequence of results in other matches in European Group Two to have a chance of reaching next year's finals in Japan and South Korea.

The defeat means that a Portugal victory over Cyprus on Wednesday will see Holland out of the World Cup, providing yet another chapter in the Netherlands' long tale of under-achievement stretching back to 1974.

That was the year that the total footballers led by Johann Cruyff somehow contrived to squander victory in the the World Cup final against West Germany in Munich.

With one of the finest squads of players in Europe, Holland had nevertheless been optimistic of success in next year's finals, and looked impressive in beating England during a friendly this month.

However Jason McAteer's winner in Dublin in all probability means Holland have at least another five years to wait before they can shed their tag as the greatest football nation never to have won the World Cup.

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

POLAND THROUGH AS HOLLAND CRASH OUT

Holland were sent crashing to the brink of elimination from the 2002 World Cup over the weekend after a Jason McAteer goal gave 10-man Ireland a 1-0 victory.

On the same night, Poland became the first European nation to qualify after they hammered Norway 3-0 to wrap-up an impressive campaign.

McAteer pounced in the 67th minute of an incident-packed encounter at Lansdowne Road to give Ireland a win which guarantees Mick McCarthy's squad a top-two place in European qualifying Group 2.

But Louis van Gaal's highly rated Dutch side must now hope Group Two rivals Portugal perform an unlikely slip-up somewhere in their remaining fixtures against minnows Andorra, Cyprus and Estonia.

Despite looking the more skilful side throughout their clash with the Irish, Holland were thwarted by impenetrable defending from the home side.

"I'm not sure I'm articulate enough to describe that performance," manager McCarthy told Sky Sports Television afterwards. "The players were just magnificent. They surpassed all my expectations."

Gary Kelly had already been sent-off when his side took the lead against the run of play in the 67th minute.

It was only the out-of-favour Blackburn midfielder's third international goal but his second against Holland after he scored in last year's 2-2 away draw in Amsterdam.

"Jason McAteer can't get a game. I'm not knocking the club but surely he's good enough for someone out there. The way he ran his heart out, he epitomised our whole side," said McCarthy.

It was nevertheless an anxious finish for Ireland who in the final minute of extra time saw Holland's Manchester United striker Ruud van Nistelrroy head wide of the post with goalkeeper Shay Given beaten.

But Ireland held on and maintained their unbeaten group record.

They were reduced to 10 men in the 58th minute when Marc Overmars was tackled from behind by Kelly, a poor challenge that saw the defender rightly sent-off for a second bookable offence.

They were lucky not to go behind in the third minute when Kelly dawdled on the ball and was robbed of possession by Barcelona striker Patrick Kluivert.

He strode into the box but with only Given to beat he sidefooted wide of the right post.

In the second half Ireland rode their luck notably when experienced defender Steve Staunton headed past Given as the keeper came to collect. Agonisingly for Holland, the ball just trickled wide of the post.

EUROPE

GROUP ONE

Russia	8	5	2	1	11	5	17
Slovenia	8	4	4	0	13	8	16
Yugoslavia	8	4	3	1	15	5	15
Switzerland	8	3	2	3	15	8	11
Faroe Isles	8	2	1	5	6	17	7
Luxembourg	8	0	0	8	2	19	0

GROUP TWO

Rep of Ireland	9	6	3	0	19	5	21
Portugal	8	5	3	0	25	6	18
Netherlands	8	4	2	2	21	9	14
Estonia	8	2	2	4	10	16	8
Cyprus	8	2	2	4	12	24	8
Andorra	9	0	0	9	5	32	0

GROUP THREE

Bulgaria	8	5	2	1	14	7	17
Denmark	8	4	4	0	14	6	16
Czech Repub.	8	4	2	2	11	6	14
Iceland	8	4	1	3	14	11	13
N. Ireland	8	1	2	5	7	12	5
Malta	8	0	1	7	2	20	1

GROUP FOUR

Sweden	8	6	2	0	15	2	20
Turkey	8	5	3	0	14	6	18
Slovakia	8	3	2	3	7	7	11
Macedonia	8	1	3	4	10	12	6
Moldova	8	1	3	4	4	13	6
Azerbaijan	8	1	1	6	3	13	4

GROUP FIVE

Poland	8	6	2	0	19	6	20
Ukraine	8	3	4	1	9	7	13
Belarus	8	3	3	2	8	9	12
Wales	8	0	6	2	7	9	6
Armenia	8	0	5	3	6	12	5
Norway	8	0	4	4	5	11	4

GROUP SIX

Belgium	6	4	2	0	23	5	14
Croatia	6	3	3	0	10	2	12
Scotland	6	3	3	0	10	3	12
Latvia	7	1	1	5	4	14	4
San Marino	7	0	1	6	3	26	1

GROUP SEVEN

Spain	7	5	2	0	19	4	17
Israel	7	3	2	2	10	6	11
Austria	6	3	2	1	7	7	11
Bosnia	6	1	2	3	7	10	5
Liechtenstein	6	0	0	6	0	16	0

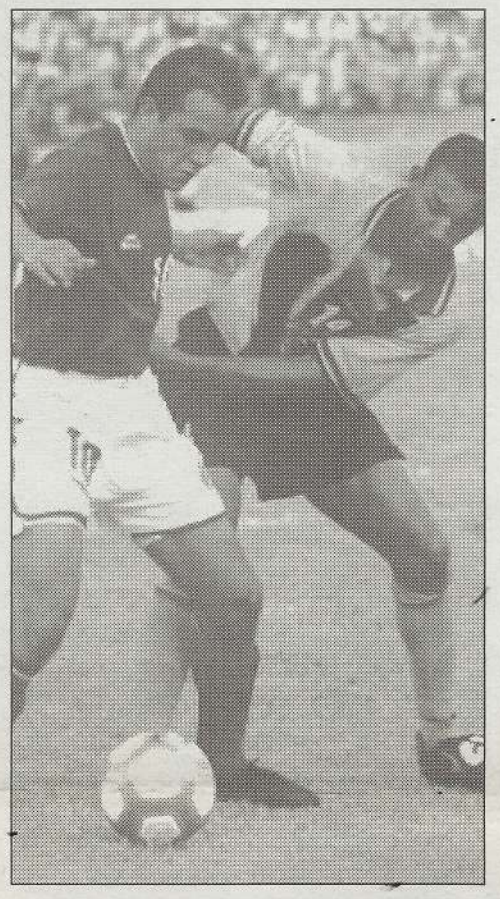
GROUP EIGHT

Italy	7	5	2	0	15	3	17
Romania	6	4	0	2	7	6	12
Hungary	6	2	2	2	14	10	8
Georgia	6	2	0	4	9	11	6
Lithuania	7	0	2	5	3	18	2

GROUP NINE

Germany	7	5	1	1	14	10	16
England	6	4	1	1	12	4	13
Finland	6	2	2	2	7	6	8
Greece	6	2	0	4	4	10	6
Albania	7	1	0	6	5	12	3

• Wales' Ryan Giggs, (right), skips ahead of Armenia's Armen Shahgelyan during the game in Cardiff, Wales.



• Mexican striker Cuahtemoc Blanco (left) and Jamaica's Tyrone Marshall tussle for the ball, during their qualifying game.

REMAINING FIXTURES

GROUP ONE
05/09/01: Yugoslavia vs. Slovenia; Luxemburg vs. Switzerland; Faroe Islands vs. Russia
06/10/01: Yugoslavia vs. Luxemburg; Russia vs. Switzerland; Slovenia vs. Faroe Islands

GROUP TWO
05/09/01: Netherlands vs. Estonia; Cyprus vs. Portugal
06/10/01: Netherlands vs. Andorra; Portugal vs. Estonia; Rep of Ireland vs. Cyprusp

GROUP THREE
05/09/01: Czech Republic vs. Malta; Bulgaria vs. Denmark; Northern Ireland vs. Iceland
06/10/01: Czech Republic vs. Bulgaria; Denmark vs. Iceland; Malta vs. Northern Ireland

GROUP FOUR
05/09/01: Turkey vs. Sweden; Slovakia vs. Moldova; Azerbaijan vs. Macedonia
07/10/01: Macedonia vs. Slovakia; Moldova vs. Turkey; Sweden vs. Azerbaijan

GROUP FIVE
05/09/01: Ukraine vs. Armenia; Belarus vs. Poland; Norway vs. Wales
06/10/01: Wales vs. Belarus; Armenia vs. Norway; Poland vs. Ukraine

GROUP SIX
05/09/01: San Marino vs. Croatia; Belgium vs. Scotland
06/10/01: Croatia vs. Belgium; Scotland vs. Latvia

GROUP SEVEN
05/09/01: Liechtenstein vs. Spain; Austria vs. Bosnia-Herzegovina
07/10/01: Israel vs. Austria; Bosnia-Herzegovina vs. Liechtenstein

GROUP EIGHT
05/09/01: Georgia vs. Lithuania; Hungary vs. Romania
06/10/01: Italy vs. Hungary; Romania vs. Georgia

GROUP NINE
05/09/01: England vs. Albania; Finland vs. Greece
06/10/01: Germany vs. Finland; England vs. Greece

ALL THE RESULTS

Faroe Islands 1 Luxembourg 0
Slovenia 2 Russia 1
Switzerland 1 Yugoslavia 2
Republic of Ireland 1 Netherlands 0
Iceland 3 Czech Republic 1
Malta 0 Bulgaria 2
Denmark 1 Northern Ireland 1
Macedonia 1 Sweden 2
Moldova 2 Azerbaijan 0
Slovakia 0 Turkey 1
Wales 0 Armenia 0
Belarus 0 Ukraine 2
Poland 3 Norway 0
Scotland 0 Croatia 0
Bosnia 0 Israel 0
Georgia 3 Hungary 1
Albania 0 Finland 2

NORTH AMERICA

Costa Rica	7	5	1	1	14	7	16
United States	7	4	1	2	9	5	13
Honduras	7	3	2	2	16	13	11
Jamaica	6	2	2	2	5	8	8
Mexico	6	2	1	3	8	8	7
Trinidad & Tobago	7	0	1	6	4	15	1

REMAINING FIXTURES

02-09-01 Jamaica v Mexico
05-09-01 Mexico v Trinidad and Tobago, Honduras v Jamaica, Costa Rica v USA
07-10-01 Honduras v Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica v Mexico, USA v Jamaica
11-11-01 Mexico v Honduras, Jamaica v Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago v USA

Play-off Fixtures

(Europe)
2nd placed Group 6 v 2nd placed Group 3
2nd placed Group 5 v 2nd placed Group 9
2nd placed Group 7 v 2nd placed Group 4
2nd placed Group 1 v 2nd placed Group 8
First legs to be played November 10-11, second legs to be played November 14.

(Europe/Asia)
2nd placed UEFA Group 2 v 3rd placed AFC
First leg to be played November 10, second leg to be played November 15.

(South America/Oceania)
Australia (winner Oceania) v 5th placed South America
Australia to host the first leg.

ASIA

GROUP A

Bahrain	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Saudi Arabia	3	1	1	1	2	3	4
Iran	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Iraq	3	1	0	2	4	3	3
Thailand 1	0	0	1	0	4	0	1

GROUP B

China	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Qatar	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
UAE	3	1	0	2	4	6	3
Uzbekistan	2	1	0	1	3	5	3
Oman	2	0	1	1	0	2	1

REMAINING FIXTURES

GROUP A
01/09/01: Thailand v Iran, at Bangkok
06/09/01: Bahrain v Thailand, at Manama
07/09/01: Iraq v Iran, at Baghdad
14/09/01: Iran v Bahrain, at Tehran
15/09/01: Thailand v Saudi Arabia, at Bangkok
21/09/01: Bahrain v Saudi Arabia, at Manama
22/09/01: Thailand v Iraq, at Bangkok
28/09/01: Iraq v Bahrain, at Baghdad; Saudi Arabia v Iran, at Jeddah
05/10/01: Iran v Thailand, at Tehran; Iraq v Saudi Arabia, at Amman
12/10/01: Iran v Iraq, at Tehran
13/10/01: Thailand v Bahrain, at Bangkok
19/10/01: Bahrain v Iran, at Manama; Saudi Arabia v Thailand, at Riyadh

GROUP B
07/09/01: Qatar v China, at Doha
08/09/01: Uzbekistan v Oman, at Tashkent
14/09/01: Oman v UAE, at Muscat
15/09/01: China v Uzbekistan, at Shenyang
21/09/01: Oman v Qatar, at Muscat
22/09/01: Uzbekistan v UAE, at Tashkent
27/09/01: UAE v China, at Abu Dhabi
28/09/01: Qatar v Uzbekistan, at Doha
04/10/01: Qatar v UAE, at Doha
07/10/01: China v Oman, at Shenyang
13/10/01: Oman v Uzbekistan, at Muscat; China v Qatar, at Shenyang
19/10/01: UAE v Oman, at Abu Dhabi
29/10/01: Uzbekistan v China, at Tashkent

England midfielder, Steven Gerrard (left) blasts through German defenders to score England's second goal in their 5-1 rout of Germany, over the weekend.